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THE HUMAN ACTIVITY OF THE WORD



THE WORD was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us.”¹
By these words the Holy Spirit has revealed to us not only the mystery of the Incarnation, but also the mystery of the human life of the Incarnate Word. By these words we realise that the human life and the human love of Jesus Christ are the human life and the human love of the divine Person of the Son of God; and we are led to see in the human activity of Christ, a personal and proper activity of the Word, an activity in which the Eternal Father and the Holy Spirit do not properly share, an activity, which, in a singular and exclusive sense, *belongs* to the Person of the Word.

Recent discussion has raised questions of no little importance in penetrating this aspect of the human activity of our Saviour. If we wish to enter into the meaning of this mystery, we must determine the precise way in which the human activity, the human life, and the human love of Christ belong exclusively to

¹ John, 1:14.

the Person of the Word. In attempting this precision, theologians have asked: Is the exclusive attribution of this activity to the Word anything more than a simple relationship? Is there not rather a physical communication of the divine Person of the Word, and of it alone, to this activity? Could such a communication of the Word be thought of, not so much as a static and inert conjunction with the human activity of Christ, but rather as an active, dynamic influence exercised by the Word over this activity? If this were so, could we go on to say that the Person of the Word was the sole ruling, governing, and dominating power over this activity, and its only ultimate source? Is the human activity of Christ a radiation and a reflection of the exclusive personal beauty of the Word, a movement and an energy stemming from and produced by the Word alone?

These questions are full of meaning for the theologian of the Incarnation. They may open new vistas for many who instinctively wish to center their spiritual lives on the Person and the virtues of the Redeemer. Above all, they come close to the fundamental mysteries of our faith, those of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and they demand a solution which the faith that seeks understanding will ever strive to find.

The present study is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of the problem. It will aim principally at three things: to elaborate the issues involved in the problem itself, indicating an avenue for fruitful investigation; to show the harmony existing between the dogmas of the Trinity and Incarnation as contemplated by St. Thomas Aquinas, detailing the application to our question; and to recall and develop an often forgotten element in St. Thomas' teaching on the Incarnation by which most of the positive and inspiring values in the above questions can be maintained in full vigour.

These three points will be presented in the three parts of this study:

- I. The problem of the dynamism of the Word.
- II. The mystery of the presence of the Word.
- III. The concept of pure formal actuation by the Word.

I. THE PROBLEM OF THE DYNAMISM OF THE WORD.

The question

The issues we have raised above may be summed up in this brief formula: does the Person of the Word exert on the human activity of Christ, a causal influence which is exclusive to Himself, divine, physical and active? Let us explain these terms.

We speak of the Person of the Word. It is of faith that Christ the Man is the Person of the Word made flesh,² and that He is a true Agent and Operator through His human nature.³ The Incarnate Word possesses a human activity.

By this human activity we understand every single operation our Blessed Lord ever performed through His human nature. We include every operation of which this nature is the principle; every movement, every thought, word, deed, and suffering from the *Ecce venio* of Mary's womb to the eternal act of consummate love by which He is united to the Father and to His Spouse, the Church. We include the working of miracles and the suffering of death; we include all those ordinary actions He shares with us—eating and sleeping, working as a carpenter and conversing with men. We include, then, every act and every movement of the humanity of Christ, and we include that humanity itself, with all its faculties and organs, in so far as they are principles of that activity.⁴

² Cf. the dogmatic definition of Chalcedon: "Sequentes igitur sanctos Patres . . . docemus . . . unum eundemque Christum Filium Dominum unigenitum, in duabus naturis inconfuse, immutabiliter, indivise, inseparabiliter, agnoscendum, nusquam sublata differentia naturarum propter unionem, magisque salva proprietate utriusque naturae, et in unam personam atque subsistentiam concurrente, non in duas personas partitum aut divisum, sed unum eundemque Filium et unigenitum Deum Verbum Dominum Jesum Christum: sicut ante prophetae de eo et ipse nos erudit, et Patrum nobis symbolum tradidit." Cf. Denz., n. 148; Mansi, VII, col. 115.

³ Cf. Lateran Council: "Si quis secundum sanctos Patres non confitetur proprie et secundum veritatem duas unius eiusdemque Christi Dei nostri operationes cohaerenter unitas, divinam et humanam, ab eo quod per utramque eius naturam operator naturaliter idem existit nostrae salutis, condemnatus sit." Cf. Denz., n. 264; Mansi, X, col. 1155.

⁴ The fact that we consider the sacred humanity directly as a principle of

We speak of a causal influence of the Word over this activity. Since we are posing the problem of a dynamic role of the Word in the exercise of the human activity of Christ, we must of necessity speak of a causal influence of the Word. We ask leave of the reader to introduce with this term a little academic language and some scholastic concepts. We are not raising a simple question which may be discussed in common terms, but one whose delicate nuances require the accuracy of precise philosophical language. In speaking, then, of a causal influence of the Word, we understand the phrase in its wide philosophical sense, inclusive of every type of true causality.⁵

We speak of a causal influence which is exclusive to the Person of the Word. No human person can share it; even more, the Father and the Spirit of Love have no proper part in it. It belongs to the Word alone, and we must look for its foundation in that which pertains exclusively to Him.

Again, we speak of a divine causality which is exclusive to the Word. Certainly there is a human causality producing each human action of Jesus Christ. It comes from the human nature of Christ, which is hypostatically united to the Word, and so in a real sense it comes from the Word. But what we speak of here is more mysterious; it is a divine causality exercised over the human action thus performed and over the humanity of Christ as and while it performs it.

This divine causality of the Word we understand as something physical, not merely moral. We are not dealing directly with the divine value, worth, and dignity which come to the human activity of Christ from its union with the Word. This would involve directly a moral influence of the Word. We are raising a deeper issue: we mean a true physical influence which the Word physically exercises over this activity.

operation, does not prevent us, but rather compels us, to consider it in itself as a principle of being; for the order of operation presupposes and is explained by the order of being.

⁵ John of St. Thomas has defined cause in this wide sense as: "Causa est principium alicuius per modum influxus seu derivationis, ex qua natum est aliquid consequi secundum dependentiam in esse." Cf. *Philosophia Naturalis*, Ia, q. 10, art. I. (in ed. Reiser, Taurini: 1933, tom. ii, p. 198).

Finally, we mean an active divine influence which is exclusive to the Word. We have already insisted on a wide signification for the word "influence." We must insist again that when we speak of "active" influence, we do not limit ourselves to efficient causality. In the physical order, passive causality is that proper to matter; active causality applies alike to efficient causality and to formal causality. The opposition of efficiency to matter as something active to something passive is well defined by John of St. Thomas. Speaking of the types of causes, he notes that new being results when what is in potency is reduced to act by that which is in act; and hence he assigns two causes opposed to each other, namely, what is in potency to act and receives it, and what causes by reducing this potency to act, or "acting." The first is matter, the second is the efficient cause.⁶ Later, opening his discussion on formal causality, he sketches the opposition of form to matter; saying that form is opposed to matter, matter being the potency which receives form and form being the act or actuality which gives being to a thing. Moreover, the reason or principle by which a form gives being to a thing, is its own very act or actuality, and so, the reason of its causality being its act, form itself is called an active cause.⁷ In our inquiry, therefore, when we ask about

⁶ John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 201: "Vel ergo consideratur esse causatum absolute et in se, vel ut accipitur et fit ab alio. Si absolute, causatur per formam, quae absolute constituit in esse. Si ut accipitur et fit ab alio, oportet, quod de ente in potentia fiat ens in actu; sic enim sequitur esse de novo, quatenus id, quod est in potentia, reducitur in actum ab eo quod est in actu, et sic oportet assignare duas causas, scilicet, illam, quae est in potentia, ut susceptiva actus, et illam, quae causat reducendo in actum seu agendo. Et prima est materia, quae causat recipiendo, et secunda est efficiens."

⁷ John of St. Thomas, *ibid.*, p. 233: "forma ex opposito se habet ad materiam, quod, sicut materia est potentia receptiva formae, quae potentia non est superaddita entitati materiae, ita forma est actus, qui dat esse rei, sive substantialis sive accidentalis, quae actualitas non est aliquid superadditum entitati formae, sicut nec potentialitas materiae. Quare ratio seu principium causandi est ipsa actualitas formae per seipsam, ita quod secundum se est actus primus seu principium actuans et dans esse. Iuxta quod dicit D. Thomas, I, q. 76, art. 6 et 7 quod "forma per seipsam facit rem esse in actu, cum per essentiam suam sit actus, nec dat esse per aliquod medium." Et in 5 Metaph., lect. 2 inquit, "quod haec est ratio quare forma est causa, quia perficit rationem quidditatis rei." Igitur ratio causandi in forma est ipsa actualitas quatenus perfectiva est quidditatis."

the active divine influence exclusive to the Word, we really ask two questions: is there an efficient divine influence exclusive to the Word, and is there a formal divine influence exclusive to the Word. We are investigating whether or not the Word alone is the sole efficient mover producing the human activity of Christ, and whether or not He alone perfects it and informs it with His own exclusive personal beauty and splendour. We inquire whether the human acts of Christ stem from the Word alone, and whether they shine with His beauty.

Dogmatic difficulties

This, then, is our question. It spontaneously raises difficulties which touch the very foundations of our faith: difficulties concerning the unity of the divine nature in its work *ad extra*, concerning the personal unity of Christ in the performance of His human operations, concerning the integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation.

There is a basic difficulty concerning the unity of the divine nature in its work *ad extra*. If we posit a divine influence in which the Father and the Holy Spirit do not properly share, it seems impossible to save one of the fundamental axioms of theology concerning the Most Holy Trinity, an axiom which the *Magisterium* of the Church has made its own, namely: The works *ad extra* of the Most Holy Trinity are undivided wherever no relation of opposition intervenes.⁸ For such an

⁸ *Indivisa sunt opera SS. Trinitatis ad extra ubi non obviat relationis oppositio.* The formula we use here has not been *explicitly canonised* by the *Magisterium*. None the less all its parts have been taken from the Councils. We have used the comprehensive formula because of the difficulty of the problem, in order to face its full import. For the formula Cf. *Conc. Toletanum* XI, "Inseparabiles enim inveniuntur, et in eo quod sunt, et in eo quod faciunt: quia inter generantem Patrem et generatum Filium vel procedentem Spiritum nullum fuisse credimus temporis intervallum, quo aut genitor genitum aliquando praecederet, aut genitus genitori deesset, aut procedens Spiritus Patre vel Filio posterior appareret." (Denz., n. 281; Mansi, XI, col. 134). And again in the same Council: "Incarnationem quoque huius Filii Dei tota Trinitas operasse credenda est, quia inseparabilia sunt opera Trinitatis." (Denz., n. 284; Mansi, XI, col. 135). Cf. *Conc. Lateranense* IV: "Et tandem unigenitus Dei Filius Jesus Christus, a tota Trinitate communiter incarnatus, . . ." (Denz., n. 429; Mansi, XXII, col. 981-982). Cf. *Conc. Florentinum*, "... omniaque sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio" (Denz.,

influence of the Person of the Word on the human activity of Christ seems to indicate a true divine operation *ad extra* and does not seem to remain within the limits of the relative opposition between the Word and the Father. On the other hand, the axiom seems to be so vital a bulwark in the defence of the dogma of the Most Holy Trinity and indeed of the very unity of the divine essence, that its denial seems necessarily to involve a denial of the unity of the Triune God. Clearly, if there is a divine operation *ad extra* which belongs to the Word and not to the Father and the Holy Spirit, there must be a principle of operation and so a nature which belongs to the Word and not to the other two Persons. This leads to Tritheism.

Moreover, this difficulty seems to be valid whether we think of an active influence of the Word in the order of efficient causality or in the order of formal causality. That it applies to the order of efficiency is obvious, for the principle by which a thing efficiently produces, is its nature. That it applies to an influence in the order of formal causality is also true, for nothing can inform and perfect except by reason of its perfection; hence we would have to think of a divine perfection which was exclusive to the Word, in which the Father and Holy Spirit did not share.

On the other hand, if we deny every divine influence on the human activity of Christ which is physical, active and exclusive to the Word, we meet an equally formidable objection on the score of the personal unity of Christ. In this case, there would seem to be nothing which comes to the humanity of Christ, precisely as a principle of operation, from the Person of the Word in an exclusive way; nothing which is given to it from the Word which does not come also from the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is then difficult to understand how the Person of the Word is the sole operator of the human activity of Christ,

n. 703; Mansi, XXXI(B), col. 1736). Cf. Pius PP XIII, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, AAS, XXXV (1943), 231: "certissimum illud firma mente retineant . . . omnia esse habenda SS. Trinitati communia, quatenus eadem Deum ut supremam efficientem causam respiciant." The application of this axiom to the Incarnation may be seen in St. Augustine, PL XL, col. 251, and in St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 3, a. 4, ad 1.

difficult to see how He remains the sole Agent to whom this activity must be attributed. For either we are forced to conceive an Incarnation of the Three divine Persons, or we fall into the danger of conceiving the human nature of Christ itself as an independent subject of operation, which places these actions, an independent Operator, and an independent person. This would be Nestorianism.

This objection aims principally at the denial of *every* active influence proper to the Word, that is, both efficient and formal. If a formal influence only were admitted, and it were successfully explained how this could be exclusive to the Word, then the objection could perhaps still be made that such an influence would not have the personal unity of Christ as an Agent, without a further exclusive efficient influence of the Word. Its denial might still seem to open the way to Nestorianism.

Should we return to the first position and try to save an active influence of the Word, be it efficient or formal, we have to cope with a further dogmatic objection concerning the integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation. Every nature, be it human or not, seems to postulate a certain independence or autonomy as a principle of operation. It should be able to act without the necessity of, and completely free from, every external influence except the divine motion which gently moves it towards its object, which divine motion is reduced to the divine government of all things, and is common to the Three divine Persons. This independence seems to be demanded by the very fact, that, as a nature, it is a true and intrinsic principle of operation. If then we assert a physical, active, divine influence exercised over the humanity of Christ by the Word alone, so that without it Christ's humanity does not and cannot act, we seem to diminish that humanity precisely as a principle of operation, to leave it weak, inert and empty. Moreover, we seem to make Christ our Lord Himself inferior to other men precisely in so far as He is a human Agent and human Operator. Finally, each one of His operations seems to be a conjunction of an action which is deficiently human with an action which is mysteriously divine, so that His human

activity is not perfect and integral in so far as it is human, and His two operations, divine and human, no longer remain unconfused and inconvertible. The result would be Monenergism, Monothelitism, and Monophysitism.

This difficulty is urged principally against an efficient influence of the Word over the humanity of Christ as a principle of operation. It is valid also for every kind of truly active divine influence which might be attributed to the Word in an exclusive way. It applies also then to a formal influence. And indeed, the danger of Monophysitism is by no means avoided if we speak of a formal influence, for it seems that such an information is impossible without reception of the informant by the thing informed, with consequent limitation, determination and coarctation of the informant. But to posit a limitation, determination and coarctation of the Word by the sacred humanity of Christ clearly leads to Monophysitism.

These are the chief dogmatic issues involved in our problem. On the one hand, we have danger of Tritheism and of Monophysitism, on the other danger of Nestorianism. Our solution must respect the difficulties on each side.

General trends among theologians

Though many aspects of our problem are present throughout the Christological discussions of recent decades, the problem in its totality seems to have become explicit rather slowly.⁹ It is natural then that theologians should express themselves according to certain general modes of thought on the problem, with the result that we have trends or currents among them, rather than strongly defined opinions. It is natural too that these general trends should group around the chief and obvious difficulties—those of which we have just spoken. There is among theologians an affirmative tendency, stating an exclusive influence of the Word, and striving above all to maintain the personal unity of Christ with all that it entails, and there is a

⁹ We refer especially to the discussions concerning the theory of the *Assumptus-Homo*, and those about the psychological consciousness of Christ and His psychological *Ego*.

negative tendency, denying any exclusive influence of the Word, and striving to preserve at all costs the unity of the divine action *ad extra*, and the absolute integrity of the humanity of Christ as a principle of operation.

The negative tendency, denying every physical divine influence on the human activity of Christ which might be exclusive to the Word, insists that where physical active causality is concerned, the Word acts neither more intensely than, nor differently from the Father and the Holy Spirit. It gives to the human actions of Christ the divine *concursus*, common to the three Divine Persons, but nothing more in the dynamic order. Certainly it would affirm the absolute dependence of the sacred humanity on the sole Person of the Word in the order of being, and also in the order of operation, but at the same time it would sustain that this dependence is something static, and involves no exclusive active causal role of the Person of the Word.

This tendency therefore evades entirely the difficulties concerning the unity of the divine operations, and concerning the integrity of the human nature of Christ. It simply denies that these difficulties exist. It says that the axiom *Indivisa sunt opera SS. Trinitatis* is so absolute and universal that any exclusive active influence of the Word in the physical order, even in the case of the unique activity of Christ, is unthinkable. The Father and the Holy Spirit together with the Word, in the same way, and for the same reason, possess every dynamic control over it. Moreover, such an exclusive influence of the Word would necessarily destroy the integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation, would necessarily make Christ inferior to other men as a human Agent, and would necessarily confuse the divine and human operations of Christ.

This negative tendency, however, does not meet so easily the difficulty about the personal unity of Christ in the exercise of His human activity. Its position is simply that an entirely *static* explanation of the dependence of the sacred humanity on the Word is sufficient to answer not merely all the objections against the dogma of the Incarnation, but all the legitimate

inquiries of the human mind attempting to penetrate the mystery. Its ultimate standpoint is the concept of the hypostatic union as something purely static. It is easy to see how the whole tendency stems radically from the absolute acceptance and universal application of the axiom of the unity of the divine operations *ad extra*.

Against this tendency, however, another affirmative current among theologians upholds an influence—which it confesses to be very mysterious—which is physical, active, and divine, and which is exerted over the human activity of Christ by the sole Person of the Word. The principal intention of the tendency is simply to stress the intimate unity between the Person of the Incarnate Word, our Redeemer, and the human nature He has assumed, especially in each human action He performs and above all in the act of priestly oblation by which He achieved our Redemption. Hence this tendency is especially directed against extolling more than is due the qualities of the human nature of Christ as a principle of activity, lest thereby a fatal abyss be posited between the Person of the Word and His human activity. For the affirmative tendency, then, the difficulty about the personal unity of Christ cannot exist.

The other two difficulties, however, become urgent against it. In reply, it is inclined to say that, even if there were at present no wholly satisfying solution to these difficulties, the doctrine of the dynamic role and exclusive divine influence of the Word must remain firm and unshaken, since its intimate connection with the revealed dogma of the personal unity of Christ makes it something which belongs at least implicitly to the deposit of faith; which can in no way be denied or put in doubt because of the weakness of our human intellects in penetrating the mystery. The ultimate standpoint of the affirmative tendency is that we cannot satisfy all the inquiries of our minds about the Incarnation unless we think of the Hypostatic Union as in some way *dynamic*, involving an exclusive active causality of the Word. It is easy to see how the whole tendency takes its departure from considering the unique Person of Christ and sees in that light the whole mystery of our salvation.

Each tendency has given a different point of departure, a different concept of the hypostatic union, and a final acknowledgement of an unpenetrated aspect of a different mystery. Our problem will be to try to harmonize these mysteries by searching deeply into the hypostatic union itself.

Sources of divergence among authors

When we weigh more deeply the more express opinions of theologians, and consider in their light the implicit tendencies, we are led to believe that the real cause of divergence among them lies in basic attitudes towards the hypostatic union. These attitudes will in turn depend on a concept of personality and its analogical application to the Three Divine Persons and to Jesus Christ.

Several times in the history of theology, there has been a willingness among some writers to admit a duality of subjects in Jesus Christ with respect to His dual activity; namely, the divine subject which is the Person of the Word, and a human subject with which He is hypostatically united. Thus they would verbally maintain the unique and singular Person of Christ, but propose a duality of acting subjects. This position had already appeared among medieval authors;¹⁰ it is seen clearly in the writings of two Jesuits in the eighteenth century, Jean Hardouin, and Isaac Joseph Berruyer;¹¹ it is the thought

¹⁰ The *prima opinio* placed by Lombard was that of those "qui dicunt in Incarnatione hominem quemdam ex anima et carne constitutum, et illum hominem factum esse Deum, et Deum illum hominem." (Cf. 3 Sent., dist. VI, titulus, apud S. Thomam Aq. Scriptum super Sententiis Magistri Petri Lombardi, ed. M. F. Moos, O. P., Parisiis, 1933, tom. iii, p. 211).

¹¹ Bibliographical indications concerning Hardouin and Berruyer may be found in B. M. Xiberta, O. Carm., *Tractatus de Verbo Incarnato*, Matriti: 1954, 707, 274-277; in P. Parente, *Nel Mistero di Cristo*, apud Teologia Viva, I, Roma, 1954, 379-382; in J. de Backer, *Bibliographie des écrivains de la compagnie de Jésus*, I, Liège, 1853, 372-385, and III, Liège, 1856, 144-152; in C. Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la compagnie de Jésus*, I, Bruxelles-Paris, 1890, col. 1361-1370, and IV, col. 107-III. Their chief works concerning this question are: J. Hardouin, *Commentarius in Novum Testamentum*, Amstelodami: 1741 (opus posthumum); I. J. Berruyer, *Histoire du Peuple de Dieu depuis son origine, jusqu'à la Venue du Messie*, Paris: 1728; idem, *Histoire du peuple de Dieu depuis la Naissance du Messie jusqu'à la fin de la Sinagogue*, Le Hague-Paris: 1753-1755; idem, *Histoire du Peuple de Dieu*,

also of the Franciscans Déodat Marie de Basly and Léon Seiller in the present century.¹² These authors, who have thus extolled the independence and autonomy of the so-called secondary human subject in Christ, can in no way conceive an exclusive active influence of the Word over the human activity of Christ.¹³ Against them, however, the vast majority of Catholic

troisième partie, ou *Paraphrase des Epîtres des Apôtres d'après le commentaire latin du P. Hardouin*, Lyons-Le Hague: 1757-1758. Indicative of their mentality are the following citations:

"Necesse est aliud esse Christum in recto, aliud Verbum . . . cum Christi nomine intelligi oporteat principium agendi completum et merendi et quidem absque Verbo . . . Christus homo qui duo in se complectitur, et Verbum nimirum quo subsistit humanitas et ipsam humanitatem quae obedivit Patri, quae oravit, quae passa est, quae ornata fuit donis ac dotibus omnibus necessariis ad agendum libere et meritorie; ille inquam homo, qui ut homo est haec omnia egit et passus est, libere, iuste, pie, sancte; ille ipse ex principio Verbum erat sine humanitate . . . secundum quod Verbum est." (Hardouin, *Commentarius*, ed. cit., p. 249).

"Non sunt operationes a Verbo elicidae . . . sunt operationes solius humanitatis." (Berruyer, *Histoire*, pars iii, tom. viii, p. 53).

¹² Bibliography concerning de Basly may be found in H. Diepen, O.S.B., "Un scotisme apocryphe, la Christologie du P. Déodat de Basly, O.F.M.," in *Revue Thomiste*, XLIX (1949), 428-492; in Xiberta, l.c., 286-287; in Parente, l.c., 275 seqq. De Basly had written:

"Nommé une personne, ce tout . . . est proprement cet homme et le Verbe éternel unis . . . il n'est rien autre chose et il n'est rien de plus . . . l'assumptus Homo, fait d'une chair vraie et d'une vraie âme intellectuelle, et volontaire, est une autonomie que Dieu Trine ne peut pas, la faisant exister, empêcher d'être une Agisseur autonome. (*La France Franciscaine*, 1929, p. 148). "L'autonomie dans le Christ, appartient à l'Homo susceptus et n'appartient nullement au Verbe, qua Verbum est." (*La France Franciscaine*, 1937, p. 35).

Seiller's writing concerning this point is contained chiefly in *L'Activité humaine du Christ selon Duns Scot*, Paris: 1944, 24-29, and *La psychologie humaine du Christ et l'unicité de personne*, Paris-Rennes: 1949, 9-11. This last article was placed on the Index in 1951, as we discuss later in these pages. An exposition of his opinion can be found in Xiberta, l.c. 286-7; Parente, l.c. 291 seqq; and in M. Browne, O.P., "Deviazioni sul terreno della psicologia umana di Cristo," in *Osservatore Romano*, 19 Luglio 1951. This last article is of great moment in so far as it accompanied and explained a decree of the Holy Office and was signed *Maestro del Sacro Palazzo Apostolico*.

¹³ This is not only clear from the position of our authors, but is explicitly stated by them. A few citations: Berruyer: "Ad complementum autem naturae Christi humanae in ratione principii agentis et actiones suas sive physice sive supernaturaliter producentis unio hypostatica nihil omnino conferat." (*Histoire*, pars iii, l.c. p. 22). de Basly: ". . . les actions de l'Ame, de l'Homme subjoint au Verbe, le Verbe, n'agissant ni par ni sur cette Ame, ni par ni sur cette Homme, le Verbe est

theologians have always maintained the unicity of acting subject in Christ, as being essentially bound up with the unicity of Person itself.¹⁴ But the problem of an exclusive dynamic influence of the Person of the Word, who is this acting Subject, over the assumed humanity, has not often been considered by them.

So far the root of divergence lies in different acceptations of the common, every-day notion of person. For those who are in accord in equating the idea of "independent subject of operation" with that of person, there is still room for disagreement when they consider what formally constitutes a person, and what, in consequence, formally achieves the hypostatic union.

The Scotist school has always refused to place the formal constituent of created personality in anything positive distinct from the individual nature concerned; the Thomist school, with St. Thomas, has always maintained that it consists in something positive really distinct from that individual nature. The Scotist school goes on to put its explanation of the hypostatic union in a real relation between the humanity of Christ and the Person of the Word, a relation which alone is enough to

dit les faire, mais in obliquo c'est à dire en vertu de la communication des idiomes." Seiller: ". . . il nous faut accorder à l'Homo Assumptus une véritable autonomie dans le domaine de l'action. Cet Homo Assumptus . . . n'est pas sous l'influence dynamique du Verbe . ." (*La psychologie* . . . pp. 6-7).

¹⁴ Against Hardouin and Berruyer, two outstanding critiques are those of L. Legrand, *Tractatus de Incarnatione Verbi Divini*, Parisiis: 1754, diss. XI—this work was reprinted by Migne in his *Theologiae Cursus Completus*, Parisiis: 1841, IX, col. 811-893; and of St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, in his *Trionfo della Chiesa, cioè Istoria delle Eresie*, III, Napoli: 1772,—which has been translated from the Italian into Latin by A. Walter, C. SS. R., *De Ecclesiae Triumpho, seu Historia Haeresum*, pars 2, confutatio XV, Cf. on our question pp. 291-493, nn. 31-35. (The condemnations made of the errors of Hardouin and Berruyer may be seen listed in Legrand, l. c., coll. 825, 839 seqq., 959 seqq.; in Hurter, *Nomenclator Litterarius*, Oeniponte: 1910, col. 1417-1418; in *Benedicti XIV Bullarium*, Prati: 1846, III, pars. 1, appendix altera, pp. 488-490; in *Bullarii Romani Continuatio*, Prati: 1842, IV, par. 1, pp. 67-68; in the *Mandament et Instruction pastorale de Monseigneur l'Eveque de Soissons*, 2 vols., Paris: 1740—pp. 225-249 are worth consulting on our point.) The whole case of Hardouin and Berruyer seems to lack an adequate historico-doctrinal treatment.

The attitude of modern theologians towards the theories of de Basly and Seiller may be seen from the articles of Xiberta, Diepen and Parente quoted above; the bearing of recent decrees of the Holy See in their regard will be discussed later.

place the fully integral humanity in a state of dependence on the Word.¹⁵ The Thomist school goes further, and posits not only the real relation, but also a real and ontological foundation for it in the communication of the positive perfection of divine personality to the sacred humanity in place of its connatural human personality.¹⁶ Both explanations satisfy the demands of dogma, and preserve the essential meaning of the terms in which the Church has taught the mystery of the Incarnation; whether the Scotist explanation can equally meet the demands of a mind that seeks a fully rational explanation of the mystery, insofar as it can be given, remains a matter of long standing dispute between the two schools. But the Scotists who see no positive ontological communication of the Word to Christ's humanity in the line of personality, have never acknowledged, and have consistently rebutted, any suggestion of an exclusive dynamic influence of the Word over this humanity.¹⁷ For the

¹⁵ Scotism conceives personality as adding to the individual substantial nature the denial of aptitudinal and actual dependence on another *suppositum*. It remains, however, in obdiential potency to assumption. The sacred humanity, then, is not a human person distinct from the Word, precisely because it is assumed by the Word; and the relationship of belonging to the Word is sufficient to count out the negative state of having no aptitudinal and actual dependence.

¹⁶ Thomism, for which personality is a positive perfection distinct from the substantial individual nature, sees in the sacred humanity a positive supplying of the positive perfection of connatural human personality by the positive perfection of divine personality. This supplying must be achieved by setting up a positive ontological foundation for the real relation of union between the sacred humanity and the divine Person of the Word.

¹⁷ Père Seiller, in *L'Activité humaine du Christ*, p. 28, cites these words of Scotus: "Verbum nullam causalitatem habet super actum voluntatis creatae in Christo quam non habet tota Trinitas." (Op. Oxon., III, d. XVII, q. 1, n. 4). And he adds the following significant reflection: "En tout cela l'Ecole Franciscaine a retenu l'enseignement du Maître." (Seiller, p. 29.) The same article also shows the influence of this Scotist position on other questions of Christology, especially, the impeccability of Christ, the meritorious value of His actions, His satisfaction, etc. This Scotist view has been championed in recent years by Paul Galtier, S. J., especially in *L'Unité du Christ, Être, Personne, Conscience*, Paris: 1939, and in many articles especially in controversy with P. Parente. For the Scotist opinion in general and in Galtier, Cf. Diepen, "La psychologie humaine du Christ selon S. Thomas d'Aquin," in *Revue Thomiste* L (1950) 515-542, especially p. 523 seqq. Parente has described the mentality of the modern Scotists in *Nel Mistero di Cristo*, p. 273 seqq. It is to be noted that both the Scotists and Galtier, who differs

Thomists, however, there is a positive communication of the Word in the line of personality, and as a result the question may remain open whether or not there could be, in this communication or in its necessary consequences, any exclusive active influence of the Word. Some of them, as we shall see, have favored the idea.

The problem of the exclusive dynamic influence of the Word, therefore, properly and directly belongs to those theologians who with the Thomist school conceive the Incarnation not merely as a real relationship but also as a positive ontological communication of the Word to the sacred humanity. Among them there is a basic unanimity in approach to the problem, in so far as they begin with an inquiry into the positive sources of the mystery of the Incarnation, and only later turn to a speculative investigation of the data thus found. That their conclusions are divergent, is indicative of the intricacy of the question and the delicacy of judgment needed in its solution.

Many who have turned especially to the Oriental Councils and the Greek Fathers, have suggested that the divine operation moving the sacred humanity to act, might be proper to the Person of the Word, insofar as it is modified by the personal property of the Word.¹⁸ This manner of speaking is to be found

from them in some points, agree on our precise question with Déodat de Basly and Seiller. This is not to accuse either Scotism in general or the peculiar position of Galtier of all the excesses of the *Assumptus Homo* theory. For the distinction between them, Cf. Xiberta, *loc. cit.*, 285, 287-289.

¹⁸ This manner of speaking is to be seen in Parente, Xiberta, and E. A. Wuenschel, C. SS. R., among modern authors. Parente, especially in *Nel Mistero di Cristo*, p. 373, has spoken of a divine influence "attraverso il verbo": "Ma sotto un certo vero aspetto appartiene personalmente al Verbo, in quanto quel influxo è comunicato, come l'essere o la sussistenza, attraverso il Verbo, e l'azione umana per conseguenza dice relazione reale alla Persona del Verbo e per essa alla natura divina e quindi alle altre due persone." The force of this *attraverso* is to us not altogether clear: it may mean only that the Word is the reason for the giving of a singular influence common to the Three Persons, but it does seem to suggest that an exclusive influence is communicated physically by the Word alone, an influence, indeed, which is not co-terminous with existence and subsistence. Wuenschel, in "De operatione Christi theandrica eiusque principio quod," in *Doctor Communis*, 1952, II-45, writes on p. 42, "Talis influxus autem non pertinet ad ordinem causae efficientis, nam omne quod rationem efficientiae habet in unione hypostatica, toti

in Petavius, who seems to have influenced many after him.¹⁹ These authors, then, would, implicitly at least, look on the

Trinitati commune est. Pertinet potius ad ordinem causae formalis, demptis omnibus imperfectionibus, scilicet quatenus Verbum naturam humanam terminat et complet subsistentia sua; atque exseritur virtute divina praecise ut est in Verbo, proprietate sua personali affecta." The phrase "exseritur virtute divina praecise ut est in Verbo" is explained on p. 43: "Omnia enim in natura humana (Christi) evenerunt vi potentiae et concursus tribus personis communis. A Verbo procedebant vi eiusdem potentiae et concursus, sed quatenus hoc attributum et haec actio sunt in Verbo et proprietate sua relativa afficiuntur . . .". Xiberta had left room for his mind to be understood in the sense of a divine efficient action exclusive to the Word, by stressing the "active influence" of the Word over the sacred humanity. Chapters 3, 4, and 12 of his *Tractatus de Verbo Incarnato*, Matriti: 1954 could be consulted. However, in reply to his critics, he has declared in more recent articles that he means no more than a formal influence of the Word: Cf. "In controversiam de conscientia humana Christi animadversiones," in *Euntes Docete*, IX (1956) 93-109, and "Observaciones al margen de la controversia sobre la conciencia humana de Jesucristo," in *Revista espanola de teologia*, XVI (1956) 215-233.

Many commentators on Parente's work or on that of Xiberta have taken occasion to approve the idea of a *singular* divine efficiency over the human faculties of Christ which is physically exercised by the Three Persons—and such is in reality the value of Father Wuenschel's article. On this point Cf. R. Spiazzi, O.P., in a review of Parente in *Osservatore Romano*, 14 Aprile, 1951; J. H. Nicolas, O.P., in "Chronique de Théologie dogmatique," in *Revue Thomiste*, LIII (1953) 421-428, especially p. 425; M. Flick, S.J., in a review of Parente in *Gregorianum*, XXXII (1951) 595-596; Diepen, in "La psychologie humaine du Christ selon S. Thomas d'Aquin," in *Revue Thomiste*, L (1950) 515-542, cf. especially pp. 532-536; G. Philips, in a review of Parente in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, XXVIII (1952) 500; S. Garofalo, in *Gesù Orante*, Rome, 1955; G. de Rosa, in "Una dissertazione cristologica inserita nell'Indice dei libri proibiti," in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), LVII (1954) 262-279; Others have been critical of the idea of an exclusive efficiency which they read in the pages of Parente and Xiberta: Cf. L. Ciappi, O.P., in "Il problema dell'Io di Cristo nella teologia moderna," in *Sapienza*, IV (1951) 421-438, and in "Autonomia e indipendenza della natura umana di Cristo secondo il Rev. P. Galtier, S.J., in *Sapienza*, V (1952) 90-96; J. H. Nicolas, in the article and place quoted above; H. Diepen, l.c. especially pp. 536-541; A. Perego, S.J., in "Il lumen gloriae e l'unità psicologica di Cristo," in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza) LVIII (1955) 90-110 Cf. p. 98; F. de P. Sola, S.J., in "Una nueva explicación del YO de Jesucristo," in *Estudios Ecclesiásticos*, XXIX (1955) 443-478, cf. p. 459; J. Sweeney, S.J., in *Theological Studies*, XVII (1956) 388-397, "Recent developments in dogmatic theology"; K. McNamara, in "The Psychological Unity of Christ: A problem in Christology," in *The Irish Theological Quarterly*, XXIII XXIII (1956) 60-69; Cf. p. 64.

¹⁹ Cf. Dionysius Petavius Aurelianensis, S.J., *De Incarnatione Verbi*, liber octavus, ed. Vivès, Parisiis: 1867, tom. 6, cp. 10. (Cps. 11 and 12 are also worth con-

axiom *Indivisa sunt opera SS. Trinitatis ad extra* as having an exception in the case of the human activity of Christ. On the other hand, many other authors are slow to recognize in early Conciliar and Patristic texts clear references to precisely a causal influence which is physical, active, divine, and exclusive to the Word. They are especially loathe to speak of such texts as necessarily indicative of an efficient divine motion on the human faculties of Christ which would be exclusive to the Word.²⁰ The interpretation of these texts becomes then an important point in our discussion.

sulting). Petavius, well aware of the difficulty concerning the personal unity of Christ, thus stated his position:

"... cum Persona Verbi humanae naturae conjungi dicitur, non aliud intelligimus, quam naturam divinam cum ea copulari: non absolute, praeciseque sumptam, sed quatenus determinata est et modificata personali Verbi proprietate. Eodem modo divinitatis attributa omnia, etiam absoluta et communia, personis tribus, cum eadem humanitate junguntur. Quare ipsa *ἐνέργεια* et operatio divina, secundum interiorem substantiam, et ut est in Deo considerata, et proprietate modificata Verbi ad humanam naturam applicatur, et fit ei peculiaris, ac *θεανδρικήν ἐνέργειαν* Christi propriam efficit, quae perinde ex operatione illa divina, per congruentem Verbo subsistendi modum definita, et determinata, atque ex humana functione componitur: ut ex utraque natura persona ipsa Christi, quam compositam esse supra docuimus. Ut autem natura divina humanae Christi naturae conjungitur; nec ex eo sequitur totam ipsam Trinitatem uniri, etsi tota ipsa natura Trinitatis cum illa societur. Sic operatio totius communis Trinitati cum humana operatione committitur, non tamen eodem modo operari Trinitas *ἐνεργείας θεανδρικής* dicitur, quo Verbum ipsum: eo quod non ut personis communis est tribus, sed ut proprietate personali Verbi modificata est operatio ista, ad humanam *ἐνέργειαν* accommodatur." N. XV. p. 255.

We believe that the citations of Petavius in the writings of Parente and Wuen-schel indicate an influence of his mentality. Others authors, older indeed, have spoken of a unique efficient influence on the sacred humanity, but have not been as clear as we would wish in determining whether it is exclusive to the Word or not. Billot could be consulted, *De Verbo Incarnato*, Romae: 1922, p. 306.

²⁰ Clear opposition has come from Père J. H. Nicolas, O.P., in the *Revue Thomiste*, loc. cit., who writes: "Une telle explication est irrecevable. Ce n'est pas seulement à propos de cet influx . . . c'est à propos de toute action ad extra qu'on pourrait faire intervenir cette modification personnelle qui l'approprierait à l'une ou à l'autre des trois Personnes . . . et on se heurte dans tous les cas à l'axiome canonique: In Deo omnia sunt unum ubi non obviat relationis oppositio." (p. 425). Besides the authors mentioned in the last note, we would single out the opposition of the Jesuit Fathers in the universities of Innsbruck and Spain: Cf. F. Lakner, "Eine neuantiochenische Christologie" in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, LXXVII (1955) 212-228; K. Rahner, "Probleme der Christologie von

Some who have maintained from the Patristic texts the exclusive dynamic influence of the Word, and others who have hesitated to give unqualified approval to this judgment, have turned to a speculative consideration of the hypostatic union for explanation of the problem. Commencing from the idea of a positive communication of the Person of the Word to the humanity of Christ in the line of personality, and, as is commonly taught, also in the line of existence, they have considered that, just as the divine existence, which is common to the Three Persons, is communicated to the humanity of Christ in and through the Word alone, so also the divine efficient promotion, of itself is common to the Three Persons, might be communicated to it in and through the Word alone.²¹ The extension would seem to be justified from the common philosophical

heute," in *Schriften zur Theologie*, I, Einsiedeln: 1954; J. M. Dalmau, S. J., in "La analogia en el concepto de persona," in *Estudios Ecclesiasticos*, XXVIII (1954, 195-210, cf. p. 210; J. Solano, S. J., in *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, III, Matriti: 1953, pp. 59, 182.

Most of this opposition has been made on the force of the Trinitarian axiom rather than on an exposition of the direct sense of the Patristic texts alleged. The chief of these texts are: Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Divinis Nominibus*, cap. 2 (cf. Migne, PG III, c. 643, and S. Thomas, *In Librum Beati Dionysii De Divinis Nominibus expositio*, ed. C. Pera, O. P., Taurini-Romae: 1950, p. 51—these two texts differ.); Pseudo Dionysius, *Epistola Quarta ad Caium* (Cf. Migne, PG III, col. 1073-1074, and S. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 19, a. 1, ad. 1.—again these two texts differ.); S. Leo the Great, *Epistola dogmatica ad Flavianum*, c. IV (Cf. Migne, PL LIV, col. 767 and Mansi, V, col. 1375 (1275)—1378 (1278), and Sermon LIV (Cf. Migne, PL LIV, col. 319)—the same text is also quoted by St. Thomas in III, q. 19, a. I, c.; and the exegesis of these three texts made the Fathers themselves: Cf. S. Leo the Great, Migne PL LIV, col. 767, 1163, and Mansi, V, col. 1375-1378, and XI, col. 266; S. Martin, Mansi, X, col. 886, 893-986; Concilium Lateranense Mansi, X, col. 1155; S. Sophronius of Jerusalem, Migne, PG, LXXXVII, col. 3167-3170, 3178; S. Maximus the Confessor, Migne, PG XCI, col. 95-98, col. 119, and especially Migne IV, col. 222-223; S. Agatho I, Mansi, XI, col. 267, 266; the Fathers of the Third Council of Constantinople, Mansi, XI, col. 3711; and S. John Damascene, Migne, PG XCIV, 1059, 1079, 841.

²¹ It will be seen from the citations above that the force of the argumentation from the Patristic texts is largely merged with this speculative argument. Some have wished to connect this argument exclusively with the Billot or Capreolus explanation of the hypostatic union; we would rather see it as a possible extension from the common Thomist position, which holds a positive communication of the divine *esse* to Christ's humanity, even though it does not always sustain such a communication as the formal constituent of the union.

axiom, *Agere sequitur esse*. Thus, just as there might be a positive communication of existence to Christ's humanity, which is exclusive to the Person of the Word, so also there would be a positive communication of the divine efficient operation *ad extra* premoving the humanity of Christ to act, given to it in and through the sole Person of the Word. It seems that we must understand the Word as the sole Person "in and through" which the efficient motion is given to the sacred humanity, in a strictly *physical* sense: the Word is not merely the reason why a singular efficient motion common to the Three Persons is given to the sacred humanity, but is the sole Person who physically communicates it. Against this argument, other theologians have objected that the extension of the philosophical axiom alleged is invalid, and that a false similarity has been placed between existence and efficiency.²² The issue is important, as it could perhaps be alleged that only an exclusive efficient action of the Word would be sufficient to found a real relationship of the sacred humanity towards the sole Person of the Word, and so its denial would be a step back into the way of Scotism.

The argument in favour of the extension to an exclusive efficiency of the Word, appears to be strengthened if we accept the opinion, shared by Billot and by many of the earlier Thomists, that the formal constituent of the divine personality of the Word is the absolute subsistence of the Deity, not as absolute and common, but as modified and possessed by the divine relation which is the Word. On that assumption, the communication of the Word to the humanity of Christ, formally and directly in the line of personality (and not merely in that of existence) involves necessarily the giving of something, which in itself would be common to the Three Persons, but which in this case is given *as* the sole property of the Word. Have we not already room for the extension to the idea of a communication of the divine efficiency, which ordinarily should be common to the Three Persons, in and by the sole Person of the Word? This

²² Cf. the articles quoted in notes (18) and (20).

insistence is deeper than the preceding argument; it has won some favour, but many theologians either refuse to accept its validity, or deny the premise from which it begins.²³

The value of this argument, depending as it does on a concept of the hypostatic union itself, is a key point in our discussion.

We find a further basic issue of our problem in the consideration of the hypostatic union from the point of view of formal causality. The question is raised, whether or not the positive communication of the Word to the sacred humanity in the line of personality verifies the concept of formal causality in the strict sense. The replies of those authors who have considered the question are as different as their ideas of formal causality itself. There are some who, content with the Scotist explanation of the hypostatic union, have seen in the simple relationship of the sacred humanity to the Word a perfecting by the Word in the line of formal causality. Others have demanded more than a simple relationship for a true formal influence; they have required some physical exercise of the perfection of the formal cause, by which it communicates its perfection to another. These authors have naturally turned to the positive communication of the Person of the Word to the sacred humanity in the line of personality, and have asked whether or not it could be called a formal influence. Some have replied in the affirmative: thus the Word would possess over the humanity of Christ a formal influence which is divine and exclusively His own, and the answer to our problem would remain in the affirmative. The explanation of how this can be, differs among authors. Some have seen it verified through the means of something created, formed in the sacred humanity, by which and through which that humanity is perfected with the actuality and perfection of the Word.²⁴ Others insist that there is no created reality

²³ Père C. V. Hëris, who accepts the Capreolist explanation of the hypostatic union, will have none of the proposed extension. Cf. *The Mystery of Christ*, Cork: 1950, p. 43. Cf. also G. D. Smith, "Notes on recent work," in *Clergy Review*, 1951, p. 106.

²⁴ Cf. the classic disputation on the created mean in the hypostatic union, F. Suarez, S. J., *De Incarnatione*, pars prima, ed. Coleti, Venetiis: 1745, tom. XVI, disp. 8, sect. 3, pp. 192-3 and John of St. Thomas, O. P., *Cursus Theologicus*,

in the hypostatic union distinct from the humanity of Christ and its relation of union, and explain how there can be a formal influence of the Word by means of an uncreated conjunction and identity of the sacred humanity with the Word in the line of personality. This uncreated identity, they say, is the only satisfactory foundation for the real relation of union itself. They consider it not merely as something static and inert, but as verifying in itself the idea of formal causality on the part of the Word, by which the Word physically perfects the sacred humanity with the perfection of His own divine personality.²⁵

tom. II, ed. Solesm., Parisiis-Tornaci-Romae: 1934, q. 12, disp. 13, art. 4, nn. 8 seqq. Cf. also the view in more recent times of M. de la Taille, S. J., especially in his articles, "The Schoolmen," in *The Incarnation—Papers from the Summer School of Catholic Studies held in Cambridge* (London: 1925); "Actuation créée par l'Acte Incréé," in *Recherches des sciences religieuses*, XVIII (1928), p. 260 seqq; and "Etrelien amical d'Euxode et de Palamède sur la grace d'union," in *Revue Apologétique*, XLVIII (1929) 5-26 and 129-145. Against de la Taille, there is a refutation at length by Father T. U. Mullaney, O. P., "The Incarnation: de la Taille vs. the Thomist Tradition," in *The Thomist*, XVII (1954) 1-42. There are perhaps traces of the de la Taille mentality in J. Solano, S. J., in *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, III, Matriti: 1953, 53 seqq., cf. 59 and 182, and in J. Ternus, S. J., "Das Seelen- und Bewusstseinsleben Jesu," in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, II, Würzburg: 1954, 81-237. Concerning the view of Ternus, cf. Parente, *L'Io di Cristo*, ed. altera, 1955.

²⁵ We shall examine later the thought of Cajetan concerning this uncreated identity, which the Thomist school has followed and especially concerning the verification of the idea of formal causality through it. The chief Thomist authors who have thus spoken of a formal causality of the Word, are Cajetan, in I, q. 12, a. 2, nn. 15-16, in III, q. 4, a. 2, and in III, q. 17, a. 2, nn. 18 seqq; John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, in Iam Partem, q. 12, disp. 13, a. 4, ed. Solesm. pp. 172-177, and in IIam partem, q. 2, disp. 4, art. 2, especially n. 20 seqq., ed. Metternich, Coloniae Agrippinae: 1711, p. 72, and also in his *Cursus Philosophicus*, Philosophia Naturalis, tom. II in ed. Reiser, cit., p. 235; Bannez, in Iam, q. 12, a. 2, dub. 2 post 4am conclusionem in ed. apud Stephanum Michaellem, Lugduni: 1588, p. 222; Salmanticenses, *Tractatus Theologici*, tom. 4, ed. Pauli Monti, Parmae: 1725, tract. XVI, disp. 2, dub. 2, n. 21; tract. XVI, disp. 3, dub. 3, n. 23; Gonet, *Clipeus Theologiae Thomisticae*, disp. 2, art. 3, ed. Coloniae Agrippinae: 1677, p. 140; Billuart, *De Deo Uno*, diss. 4, a. 7, p. 124 in ed. Lequette, Parisiis: 1876; and among more recent works, Del Prado, N., O. P., *De Veritate Fundamental Philosophiae Christianae* (Friburgi: 1911), pp. 627, 628, 631, 632; Billot, L. S. J., *De Verbo Incarnato*, Romae: 1922, pp. 166-167; Michel A., in *D. T. C.* VII (2), 1923, col. 1522-1523; Penido, M. T.-L., *Le Rôle d'Analogie et Théologie Dogmatique*, Paris: 1931, pp. 413-416; Hugon, E., O. P., *Tractatus Dogmatici*, I, Paris: 1933; Garrigou-Lagrange, R., O. P., *De Deo Uno*, Torino-Paris: 1938, p. 278 and *De Christo Salvatore*, Turino: 1946, p. 320; Ramirez, J. M., O. P., *De Hominis Beati-*

There are others, however, who admit this uncreated identity but refuse to see in it any idea of formal causality, stressing always that the Word with His divine personality is the term of the union and not an exclusive active cause through the union.²⁶ Still others have rejected the thesis of a formal influence of the Word, saying that the writers mentioned above have not in fact escaped from the necessity of a corresponding material causality exercised by the sacred humanity over the Word, by which the Word would be limited and received; thus they have even abandoned the concept of uncreated identity as the foundation of the relation of union, and, while remaining apart from the Scotist school, have centered their explanation of the Union in an appropriation and integration of the humanity by the Word in the line of personality: an appropriation and integration from which they strictly exclude any formal influence of the Word.²⁷

This is a third key point in our debate. It is all the more delicate insofar as a negative answer to this query of a formal influence of the Word must explain how it does not reduce its explanation of the Union itself to a mere relation, and leave itself open to the classic Thomist critiques of the Scotist position; and insofar as an affirmative answer seems to open the way to objections coming from the unity and transcendence of

tudine, III, Matriti: 1947, pp. 488-490; Daffara, M., O.P., *De Peccato Originali et De Verbo Incarnato*, Turino: 1948, p. 263; and most recently Corvez, M., O.P., "L'Unité d'existence dans le Christ," in *Revue Thomiste*, LVI (1956) 413-426. We shall examine this notion later.

²⁶ Thus many speak of a "terminative influence" to indicate the function of the Word, not just as the term of a relation, but as positively communicated in identity so that He may be the term of the relation. Cf. L. Ciappi, O.P., "Il problema dell'Io di Cristo nella teologia moderna," in *Sapienza*, IV (1951) 421-438. We believe that very often such an expression is in complete harmony with the views of the Thomist authors cited in the preceding note.

²⁷ This view, to be discussed more fully later, is especially that of Dom. H. M. Diepen, O.S.B. in several articles in the *Revue Thomiste*: Cf. RT L (1950) 112 seqq; RT L (1950) 291 seqq; RT LIII (1953) 41 seqq; and of Père J. H. Nicolas, O.P., in RT LIII (1953) 427-428 and RT LV (1955) 182. An English presentation exists in the article of Father Adrian Hastings, "Christ's act of existence," in *Downside Review*, 1955, pp. 139-159.

the Godhead, and from the integrity of the human nature of Christ.

To sum up, we have three questions:

- a) Can we find in ancient Patristic texts clear indications of an active causal influence of the Word over the sacred humanity?
- b) Can we extend the idea of a positive communication of existence and personality in and through the Word alone, to the idea of a positive communication of the divine efficient motion in and through the Word alone?
- c) Can we see in the positive communication of the Word to the sacred humanity in the line of personality and of existence, a genuine concept of formal causality?

These questions seem to be meriting the increasing interest of theologians.

Attitude of the Magisterium: the evidence.

"The Sacred Magisterium, in matters of faith and morals, must be the proximate and universal norm of truth for every theologian, for it is to it that Christ our Lord has commissioned the whole deposit of faith,—namely the Sacred Letters and divine 'tradition'—to guard and to preserve and to interpret."²⁸ In our present study we must never lose sight of this fundamental truth enunciated by the late Pontiff, Pius XII, in the encyclical *Humani Generis*. Because of the great moment inherent in our problem for a better understanding of the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and because of the dogmatic difficulties which encompass it, it is not surprising that it has in recent years come under the vigilance of the Holy Office and of the Supreme Pontiff Himself. Before determining the proper task of the Catholic theologian in relation to the three questions we have placed, we must first find out

²⁸ Sacrum Magisterium, in rebus fidei et morum, cuilibet theologo proxima et universalis veritatis norma esse debet, utpote cui Christus Dominus totum depositum fidei—Sacras nempe Litteras ac divinam 'traditionem'—et custodiendum et tuendum et interpretandum concredidit. Cf. AAS, XLII (1950) 567.

the attitude of the Holy See and the liberty of discussion permitted and fostered by it.

On the 28th June 1951, the Sovereign Pontiff approved the condemnation and insertion in the Index of Prohibited Books, resolved the previous day by the Holy Office, of a dissertation of Père Léon Seiller, O.F.M., entitled, *La psychologie humaine du Christ et l'unicité de personne*.²⁹ In this work, Père Seiller, developing the theory of the *Assumptus-Homo* of his master Père Déodat Marie de Basley, went so far as to say that the man conjoined to the Word was a distinct "Some-one" possessed of a distinct psychological personality from that of the Word, and hence admitted in Christ a dual personality while maintaining the unicity of Person. It was in consequence a denial of every exclusive dynamic influence of the Word over the human activity of Christ.³⁰

This action of the Holy Office cannot be interpreted as a definitive solution of our precise problem. We believe that its intention was principally to point out that the assignation of a dual personality to Christ was injurious to that manner of speaking which had been formulated by the unanimous consent of Catholic doctors, and which for centuries had been the best means of obtaining some understanding of the dogma of the Incarnation, which indeed had been used by Ecumenical Councils and especially by that of Chalcedon, even in dogmatic definitions. This new phrasing therefore would not only be imprudent, but would leave the dogma of the Incarnation itself like a reed shaken by the wind. With regard to our precise problem, nothing direct is said, but we must understand this action of the Holy Office as stressing the paramount necessity of being alive to every danger of Nestorianism latent in a negative solution.

On the 8th September, 1951, in the encyclical *Sempiternus Rex Christus*, commemorating the Council of Chalcedon, Pius XII wrote:

²⁹ This dissertation was first published in the periodical, *Franziskanische Studien*, Münster in Westfalen, 1948-1949; it was later published separately, Rennes-Paris: 1949.

³⁰ Cf. Note 13 above.

Although nothing prohibits further investigation into the humanity of Christ, even by a psychological process and method, none the less, in the arduous studies of this nature there are some who leave the past more than is due in order to construct novelties, and wrongly use the definition of the Council of Chalcedon to support their own "elucubrations."

These so extol the state and condition of the human nature of Christ, that it seems to be a certain subject in its own right, as though it did not subsist in the Person of the Word itself. But the Council of Chalcedon, entirely in harmony with that of Ephesus, clearly asserts that each nature of the Redeemer comes together "in one person and subsistence," and forbids that two individuals be placed in Christ, so that a certain "Assumed-Man" endowed with integral autonomy, be collocated beside the Word.³¹

This cardinal text assigns clearly the phrases "Assumed-Man" and "integral autonomy" as capable of, and bearing actually in some modern writings, a sense dangerous to the dogma of the Incarnation in so far as they open the way to Nestorianism. However, it must be noted that the Pontiff does not define the limits of that full autonomy which would leave

³¹ Quamvis nihil prohibeat quominus humanitas Christi etiam psychologica via et ratione altius investigetur, tamen in arduis huius generis studiis non desunt qui plus aequo vetera linquant ut nova astruant ac definitione Chalcedonensis Concilii perperam utantur ut a se elucubrata suffulciant.

Hi humanae Christi naturae statum et conditionem ita provehunt ut eadem reputari videatur subiectum quoddam sui iuris, quasi in ipsius persona Verbi non subsistat. At Chalcedonense concilium, Ephesino prorsus congruens, lucide asserit utramque Redemptoris naturam 'in unam personam atque subsistentiam' convenire vetatque duo in Christo poni individua, ita ut aliquis 'Homo Assumptus' integrae autonomiae compos penes Verbum collocetur. Cf. AAS XLIII (1951) 638. In the text published in the *Osservatore Romano*, which of course is not official, the words "saltem psychologicae" were to be read after the words "sui iuris." These words are not found in the official text just cited. Comments on this point may be found in Galtier, *Gregorianum*, XXXII (1951) 525-568, esp. in note 68; in Parente, *Nel Mistero di Cristo*, 392, note 1; and the article of Father Michael Browne already referred to could be consulted, in which we read: "Psicologicamente si potrebbe parlare della personalità umana di Cristo, ma solo riferendosi al Verbo stesso in quanto sussiste e opera nella natura umana assunta ipostaticamente. Ma col fare dell'io umano di Cristo un soggetto autonomo, sia pure psicologicamente, escludendo dall'attività della natura assunta il Verbo come principio agente, si corre rischio di affermare implicitamente anche un io umano ontologico. . . ."

the way open to this danger. Hence there is no clear and precise indication given on our question of the exclusive active influence of the Word. None the less we may interpret the text as implicitly bearing on our problem, by repeating the warning that a negative solution to our question could leave the way open to a Nestorian concept of our Redeemer.

On the 15th May, 1956, in the encyclical *Haurietis Aquas*, which treats of the Sacred Heart of the Most Holy Redeemer, several paragraphs were included which seem to bear directly on our problem. Speaking of the intimacy which exists between the heart of Christ and the Person of the Word, the Pontiff wrote:

(The divine and the human love of Christ) must be said to be not only co-existent in the adorable Person of the Divine Redeemer, but also mutually conjoined by a natural link, insofar as the human and the sensible (loves) are subject to the divine, and bear its analogical likeness.³²

(The heart of Christ) although no longer subject to the perturbations of this life, lives none the less and palpitates, and is conjoined in an indissoluble way with the Person of the Divine Word and in It and through It with Its divine will . . .³³

The most sacred heart of Jesus, participating as it is in a totally intimate way in the life of the Incarnate Word . . .³⁴

Wherefore the sacred heart of Jesus Christ, united hypostatically to the Divine Person of the Word, without doubt palpitated with love and even with the other impulses of the affections, which none the less so absolutely agreed and harmonised with the human will full of divine charity, and with the infinite love itself which the Son communicates with the Father and the Holy Spirit, that never

³² Cf. AAS XLVIII (1956) 344. Hi enim amores non tantum una simul existentes dicendi sunt in adorabili Persona Divini Redemptoris, sed etiam inter se naturali nexu coniuncti, quatenus divino humanus sensibilisque subiciuntur, atque illius analogicam similitudinem referunt.

³³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 336. Illud siquidem etsi mortalis huius vitae perturbationibus iam obnoxium non est, vivit tamen ac palpitat, atque indissolubili modo cum Divini Verbi Persona et in Ipsa et per Ipsam cum divina voluntate eius coniungitur.

³⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 333. . . . sacratissimum Cor Jesu, cum sit, intima prorsus ratione, Incarnati Verbi vitae particeps. . . . In the official text at this point St. Thomas is cited III, q. 19, a. I.

was there between these three loves anything contrary or dissonant.³⁵

For (the heart of Christ) is a symbol of that divine love which He communicates with the Father and the Holy Spirit, but which none the less is manifested to us through His mortal body in Him alone, as in the Word which is made flesh, for indeed in Him inhabits all the fullness of the divinity corporally.³⁶

. . . as the Angelic Doctor teaches, the charity of the August Trinity is the principle of human Redemption, in so far as, pouring out most plentifully into the human will of Christ and into His adorable heart, it induced Him, moved by that same charity, to shed His blood that He might redeem us from the slavery of sin: "I have a baptism with which to be baptised, and how am I straightened until it be accomplished."³⁷

What is the significance of these texts to our problem? Without doubt they teach the integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation. They insist that there is a conjunction of that human nature directly to the Person of the Word, so that in the Word and through the Word it is in perfect harmony with the divine will and the divine love for men. They are unequivocal and maintaining at the same time that the infinite divine love of the Word is shared and communicated with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and that that same divine love which inspired and preformed His human and redemptive

³⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 324. Quamobrem Jesu Christi cor, Divinae Verbi Personae hypostaticè unitum, ob amorem etiam et ob ceteras affectuum impulsiones procul dubio palpitavit, quae tamen et cum humana voluntate, divinae caritatis plena, et cum ipso infinito amore, quem Filius cum Patre et cum Spiritu Sancto communicat, ita congruebant omnino et consonabant ut numquam hos inter tres amores aliquid esset contrarium vel dissonans. Here in the official text St. Thomas is cited in a note, III, q. 12, a. 4 and q. 18, a. 6.

³⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 327. Symbolus enim est divini illius amoris, quem cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto communicat, sed qui tamen in Ipso tantum, utpote in Verbo, quod caro factum est, per caducum et fragile corpus nobis manifestatur, quandoquidem in ipso inhabitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter.

³⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 332. . . ut Angelicus docet, Augustae Trinitatis caritas humanae Redemptionis principium est, quatenus in humanam Jesu Christi voluntatem, et in adorandum Cor eius, uberrime exundans, eum eadem caritate permotum induxit ad suum sanguinem profundendum, ut nos a peccati captivitate redimeret: 'Baptismo habeo baptizari et quomodo coarctor usquedum perficiatur.' Here after the word 'redimeret' there is a note to S. Thomas, III, q. 48, a. 5.

activity is common to the Three Persons of the August Trinity. Finally they suggest a dual exclusive function of the Person of the Word underlying the sublime participation of the humanity of Christ in His life. This dual function we may describe as *significative* and *presential*; significative, in so far as in the Word alone the divine love of Christ is manifest to us, and presential, in so far as the Word alone, with all the fullness of the divinity, that belongs to Him, dwells in Christ corporally.

For those who would investigate the possibility of an exclusive dynamic influence of the Word on the human activity of Christ, what is there in this teaching?

First, there is great insistence on the difficulties inherent in the affirmative solution, namely the disruption of the unity of the divine action *ad extra*, and the denial of the absolute integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation.

Secondly, in speaking of the common divine love, shared by the Three Divine Persons, which moves the human heart of Christ to act, the encyclical seems implicitly to apply and to uphold the axiom *indivisa sunt opera SS. Trinitatis ad extra*. Although it does not expressly name efficient causality, it would seem to be impossible to reconcile the affirmation of an exclusive efficient influence of the Word moving the humanity of Christ to act, with the teaching of the encyclical.³⁸

³⁸ In his commentary on the Encyclical, *Haurietis Aquas* and Devotion to the Sacred Heart, in *Theological Studies*, XVIII (1957) 17-40, Father Malachy J. Donnelly, S.J., raises this point and decides it in a way which differs from ours. On p. 32 he asks, as we have done, "Is the divine love of which the Holy Father speaks in this particular section of the Encyclical a love proper to the Word, or is it rather that love which the Word has in common with the Father and Holy Spirit?" and on p. 33 he replies: "It is quite true that the hypostatic union as such terminates at being, not operations (*ad esse, non autem ad operari*), but it is equally true that, when the Word Incarnate loves in a human way (with sensible and spiritual love informed by charity) and divinely, it is the Word who loves, not the Father or Holy Spirit? Hence, I hold that the divine love to which the soul ascends through the symbolism of the Sacred Heart is first of all the personal hypostatic love of the Word alone. The Holy Father uses language which justifies one's making this conclusion." (The text quoted in support of this last sentence is, we understand, that which we have quoted in our note 36). We cannot agree with Father Donnelly's interpretation; the clear references throughout the encyclical to

Thirdly, in proposing the ideas of the intimate participation of Christ's humanity in the divine life of the Word, and of its conjunction with the common divine will only in and through the Word, the encyclical has certainly made use of perspectives very dear to the affirmative solution. However, they do not necessarily presuppose it. Participation in the divine life of the Word, and conjunction with the divine will in and through the Word, can be amply explained by the idea of the personal presence of the Word to the sacred humanity in the hypostatic union, and do not necessarily demand an exclusive active divine influence of the Word. The fact that the sacred humanity is the human nature of the Word, is ample reason for this participation and conjunction, and in this way the Word need have no more than a moral influence over the humanity, one which reduces to the order of final causality, the Word alone being the subject and hence the *finis cui* of all the human actions of Christ.³⁹ Hence while the encyclical uses perspectives dear to the affirmative solution, it does not necessarily suppose that solution.

the community of the divine love seem too insistent. (Cf. e.g. the texts in our notes 35 and 37). The important text which has caused Father Donnelly to hesitate we discuss immediately in our own text. As yet we know of no other extensive discussion on the encyclical which raises this point. Perhaps our final conclusion will not be far from Fr. Donnelly's view.

³⁹ Cajetan, in his commentary in I-II, q. 3, art. 2-3-4, thus interprets the axiom 'Unumquodque est propter suam operationem' which St. Thomas had used in art. 2: "... potest dupliciter intelligi. Primo, sicut propter rem quae est eius finis. Alio modo sicut proprium complementum: et sic est verum. Ita quod unumquodque habens operationem esse propter suam operationem, nihil aliud est quam esse propter seipsum in actu completu et perfecto." Taking this same doctrine from Cajetan, Bannez says: "alter sensus est quod unumquodque est propter suam operationem tamquam propter complementum proprium ipsius rei; et ita verificatur illa maxima, quoniam unumquodque est propter seipsum in actu completo, v.g., ignis est propter se ipsum operantem, id est, ut operetur. Atque ita substantia cum operatione melior est quam substantia sine operatione." (in I-II, q. 3, a. 2, in ed. V. Beltran de Heredia, O.P., Madrid: 1942, tom. I, p. 85.) We believe that an analogous application of this teaching to the human activity of the Word to be valid, and to be most fruitful in coming to some understanding of the human life of Christ and His function as Redeemer. It is to this point that we refer here. We leave it, as outside the strict limits of the present study, which refers to physical causality.

Lastly, there seems indicated in the encyclical a reduction of every exclusive physical role of the Word in the Incarnation to the unique personal presence by which He inhabits corporally in Christ with all the fullness of the Godhead.

A passing remark made by the Supreme Pontiff in His allocution to the Liturgists at the Vatican on 29th October, 1956, seems to confirm the general impression of the encyclical with reference to our question. Here he spoke of the act by which Christ consummates the work of our Redemption, of that by which He, "that is, the Word subsisting in human nature," will hand over the kingdom to God and the Father, and submit to Him Who placed all things under His feet, that God may be all in all.⁴⁰

Attitude of the Magisterium: general assessment.

The foregoing documents constitute the evidence. Let us now assess its bearing on our problem. We may distinguish general directives and special conclusions.

In giving general directives to theologians labouring in our problem, these documents above all insist that the dogmatic difficulties concerning the unity of the divine operation *ad extra*, the personal unity of Christ in the exercise of His human activity, and the integrity of the human nature of Christ as a principle of operation, be justly appreciated. The dogmatic definition of Chalcedon must be given paramount importance as the guiding light of the whole investigation. The investigation itself must not begin from the untenable dualist position of the *Assumptus-Homo* theory.

Beyond these general directives, we believe that two special conclusions may be taken from the documents.

⁴⁰ " . . . Le Christ est le Premier et le Dernier, l'Alpha et l'Omega, à la fin du monde tous les ennemis auront été vaincus, et la mort en dernier lieu, le Christ, c'est à dire le Verbe subsistant dans la nature humaine, remettra le Royaume à Dieu, son Père, et le Fils lui-même se soumettra à Celui qui lui à tout soumis, pour que 'Dieu soit tout en tous.' " Cf. AAS XLVIII (1956) 723. Cf. M. Fabregas, S. J., "Adnotationes in Allocutionem Pontificis super Liturgia," in *Periodica*, XLV (1956) 471.

First, there is no efficient physical divine *influence* exclusive to the Person of the Word in relation to the human activity of Christ. This is to be understood in the sense that a divine efficiency would physically be exerted by the Word and not by the Father and Holy Spirit. The reason seems to be the application of the axiom *Indivisa sunt opera SS. Trinitatis* universally where there is question of the divine efficiency. This presupposes that the difficulties concerning the personal unity of Christ in the exercise of His human activity, are solved by the concept of the *exclusive physical presence* of the Word to the sacred humanity not only in the static order, but also in the actual exercise of its activity.

Secondly, the problem of the existence of a formal causality exclusive to the Word, and hence of the existence of *any* active divine influence exclusive to the Word, in the mystery of the Incarnation, remains undecided. However, if such an influence be affirmed it will of necessity be co-terminous with the exclusive physical presence of the Word to the sacred humanity, being implicitly contained in that concept. And if it be denied, it must be explained how this same unique personal presence remains in all its perfection without it. The problem then reduces to a consideration of *the mystery of the presence of the Word*, and of the very idea of formal causality.

Therefore, in concluding this assessment of the attitude of the Magisterium, we believe that it has wished simply to preserve not only the terminology sanctioned by the Councils and by centuries of traditional theology, but also the immediate and obvious sense of that terminology. It has abstained from any definitive directive to theologians labouring to penetrate more deeply into the meaning of the mystery, even though they may see in their opposing solutions serious difficulties for the fully satisfying understanding of the mystery itself. It will leave room for debate on our problem, and allow free discussion between Scotists and Thomists, and among Thomists themselves. It will centre the efforts of all on the idea of the hypostatic union itself.

The task of the theologian.

The Catholic theologian must attempt to unfold by his labours a better understanding of the teaching of the living Magisterium of the Church. What then is his task in relation to the three principal issues of our problem?

In relation to the Patristic texts he must show by a sound exegesis that their true sense is not in disaccord with the living teaching of the Church.

In relation to the question of an exclusive efficient influence of the Word over the human nature of Christ, he must attempt to find *the ultimate reason* why such an influence is repugnant. He must try to solve the arguments which seem to indicate the contrary, and he must show how the personal unity of Christ as a human Agent is in no way weakened by his position.

In relation to the possibility of a formal influence of the Word alone over the sacred humanity, he may delve deeply into the meaning of the hypostatic union in an attempt to solve this problem, knowing that an affirmative solution, if satisfactorily maintained, will well harmonise with some of the great perspectives of the encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* in regard to the human activity and the human life of our Redeemer.

Our aims.

In the succeeding parts of this study, we wish to discuss the second and the third of these tasks of the Catholic theologian of today. We do so by expounding what we believe to be the mind of St. Thomas Aquinas in regard to each of them. We do so in the belief that St. Thomas, having made a personal analysis of the chief patristic texts involved, expressly held common influence of the divine efficiency over the human faculties of Christ by the Three Persons of the Trinity,⁴¹ and ex-

⁴¹ To elaborate the exegesis made by S. Thomas of the chief texts especially of Pseudo Dionysius and S. Leo, indicated above in note (20), would be too much for a mere note. We content ourselves with the following citation from III, a. 47, a. 3 ad 2.: "Christus secundum quod Deus, tradidit semetipsum in mortem eadem voluntate et actione qua et Pater tradidit eum; sed in quantum homo, tradidit seipsum voluntate a Patre inspirata. Unde non est contrarietas in hoc quod Pater tradidit Christum et ipse tradidit semetipsum."

pressly held the *exclusive personal presence* of the Word to the sacred humanity. We shall then see the mind of the Angelic Doctor in regard to *the mystery of the presence of the Word* to the sacred humanity, a presence which rules out an exclusive divine efficiency of the Word; and in regard to the mystery of the hypostatic union, a mystery, which, we believe, includes the concept of a "pure formal actuation" of the sacred humanity by the Word alone.

II. THE MYSTERY OF THE PRESENCE OF THE WORD.

In concluding our discussion of the problem of the dynamism of the Word over the sacred humanity and the human activity of Jesus Christ, we were left with two basic questions, one concerning the efficiency of the Word and the other concerning the formal causality of the Word over that humanity and that activity. Our search for a solution focussed on the mystery of the presence of the Word to the sacred humanity, and we placed at the head of our investigation the Thomistic concept of a positive communication of the Word to that humanity. To prepare the way for a solution to each part, we must now investigate three points which bring out the mystery of this presence:

- a) In what does this positive communication consist?
- b) How does the divine personality of the Word include the divine existence?
- c) How does it include the absolute divine subsistence?

The positive communication of the Word

St. Thomas has clearly described what the Hypostatic Union is not, and what it is. He has ruled out the idea of a union *in natura*,⁴² one that is essential or accidental, and he has insisted that it be conceived as a substantial personal union.⁴³ This is merely an expression of the dogmatic teaching of

⁴² Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, aa. 1 and 6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, a. 2; a. 6, ad 2.

Ephesus and of Chalcedon on which he relies. But he goes further, and is at pains to fix the category of being into which this unique union falls. In the *Tertia Pars*, he asks: "whether the union of the human and divine nature is something created?" It is here that we shall see his concept of the Hypostatic Union as a positive communication of the Word to the sacred humanity. St. Thomas is trying to find the real category into which this real union falls, and his chief intention in the article is to profess that it is a relation and indeed a real relation:

The union of which we are speaking is a relation which we consider between the divine and the human nature, inasmuch as they come together in one Person of the Son of God. Now, as was said above, every relation which we consider between God and the creature is really in the creature, by whose change the relation is brought into being; whereas it is not really in God, but only in our way of thinking, since it does not arise from any change in God. And hence we must say that the union of which we are speaking is not really in God, but only in our way of thinking; but in the human nature, which is a creature, it is really. Therefore we must say it is something created.⁴⁴

To get to the full meaning of this text, we must read it in the light of two parallel passages in the *Commentary on the Sentences*. It is there that the Angelic Doctor expressly assumes the doctrine of Aristotle on the foundation of a real relation, and applies it to the real relation in question.

In the *Third Book of Sentences*, dist. 5, q. I, art. I, qa. I, St. Thomas states a dual foundation for any relation, either quantity or what reduces to it, or action and passion.⁴⁵ This is

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 7.: "Unio de qua loquimur est relatio quaedam quae consideratur inter divinam naturam et humanam, secundum quod conveniunt in una Persona Filii Dei.

"Sicut autem in prima parte dictum est, omnis relatio, quae consideratur inter Deum, et creaturam, realiter quidem est in creatura, per cuius mutationem talis relatio innascitur; non autem est realiter in Deo, sed secundum rationem tantum; in humana autem natura quae creatura quaedam est, realiter est."

⁴⁵ Cf. III *Sent.*, loc. cit. "Omnis autem relatio, secundum Philosophum, fundatur vel supra quantitatem, aut quod reducit ad genus quantitatis, aut supra actionem et passionem."

taken from the Fifth Book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, cp. 15, 1020b 26-32,⁴⁶ and is explained by St. Thomas both here and in his commentary on the *Metaphysics*. His meaning in both places is that some relations immediately follow from action and passion,⁴⁷ while others follow immediately from a certain unity, which reduces to quantity under a certain aspect.⁴⁸ This unity may be threefold: it may be identity, which is unity in substance, or equality, which is unity in quantity, or likeness, which is unity in quality.⁴⁹ Although some action is always required to establish this unity (which may therefore be called a unitive action), these relations do not follow immediately from the action but from the unity which the action establishes. We are faced therefore with three realities: a unitive or unifying action, a unity which is the foundation of the relation, and a relation of union. The foundation of this relation, co-existent with the relation, is something real which does not belong to the category of relation.

St. Thomas then goes on to distinguish the movement which is at the root of every relation, whether it belong to the first or second group. This movement may be in one term, or it may be in both. If it is in both, it will, differently for each group of relations, give rise to a real relation in each term, to a real mutual relation. If it is in one only, then this term will depend on the other while the other does not depend on it, and there will be a real relation in the depending term, and a relation of reason in the term on which it depends.⁵⁰

His next step is to apply this doctrine to the Hypostatic Union. Here he will see first the unifying or unitive action which brings about the Incarnation. Next he will insist that

⁴⁶ Cf. St. Thomas' commentary on the *Metaphysics*, I. 17, n. 1001-1005.

⁴⁷ In *Metaphys.* n. 1002.

⁴⁸ Cf. III *Sent. loc. cit.*: "Unum autem reducitur ad genus quantitatis quasi principium quantitatis discretæ."

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, "Et supra ipsam fundatur identitas, secundum quod est unum in substantia;—æqualitas, secundum quod est unum in quantitate;—similitudo, secundum quod est unum in qualitate."

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, "... quaedam innascuntur ex motu utriusque; . . . quaedam autem innascuntur ex motu unius sine immutatione alterius . . ."

there can be no change or movement in the divine nature, which is immutable, but only in the human nature. He will go on to posit a drawing, or a traction in the human nature, towards unity in the divine Person. And finally he will speak of the relation thus engendered, which is real in the humanity thus drawn and united, and a relation of reason in the divine nature to which it is drawn and united.⁵¹

The same teaching, based on the same triple real distinction between *unifying action*, *unity*, and *union*, may be seen repeated in the *Third Book of Sentences*, dist. 2, q. 2, art. 2, qa. 3, ad 3, where he writes:

It is necessary that there be a union mediate between the human and divine nature, not as a cause but as an effect following the conjunction of the natures. For, as the Commentator says in the XII *Metaphysics*, it is the nature of relation that it have a cause in the other genera of being since it has the least of the nature of being.

This text is valuable, because it expressly names the unity of which we have spoken a "conjunction," and because it expressly gives this unity or conjunction priority in nature to the relation of union, in so far as it is its cause; the relation of union follows as a real effect.

It is the same teaching that we read a little further on in the same *quaestiuncula*:

. . . although relation *per se* does not terminate motion, because there is no motion to *ad aliquid*, as is proven in the V *Metaphys.* . . . nevertheless because motion terminates *per se* at some being, of necessity there follows some relation. Just as, because the motion of alteration terminates at whiteness, there follows a relation of similarity to all white things; and in like manner, since the motion of generation terminates at form, there follows the relation according to which matter is said to be under form; so also from this that the motion of the assumption of human nature terminates at the person, there follows this relation which is called union. Whence,

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, "Cum igitur in incarnatione non sit aliqua mutatio facta in natura divina, sed in humana quae tracta est ad unitatem in persona divina, erit haec relatio, scilicet unio, secundum rem in natura humana, in divina autem secundum rationem tantum . . ."

union is a mean, not as causing the assumption, but rather following it; just as was said above, water is means in act between two wet things that are touching.⁵²

Let us now return to the text of the *Tertia Pars*. We believe that its sober formula is nothing more or less than a clear statement of this same teaching: "Union . . . is a relation which we consider between the divine and the human nature inasmuch as they come together in one Person of the Son of God."⁵³

We believe that St. Thomas is distinguishing two senses of a relation, namely *union* and the *unity* on which it is founded, and we believe that in the case of the Mystery of the Hypostatic Union which he here treats, they differ more widely than heaven and earth.⁵⁴ The union taken as a relation simply is placed between the assumed nature and the divine Person of the Word, and is in the real category of relation, and is something created. The union, however, taken not simply as a relation, but as a unity and a conjunction of the assumed nature in the divine Person of the Word, is the divine unity of the Eternal Word, infinite and uncreated, which is given to the

⁵² III *Sent.*, d. 2, q. 2, a. 2, qcla. 3: "... quamvis relatio per se non terminet motum, quia in "ad aliquid" non est motus, ut dicitur V *Metaphys.*, tamen ex hoc quod motus per se terminatur ad aliquid ens de necessitate consequitur relatio aliqua. Sicut ex hoc quod motus alterationis terminatur ad albedinem, consequitur relatio similitudinis ad omnia alba; similiter etiam, ex hoc quod motus generationis terminatur ad formam, consequitur haec relatio secundum quam materia esse sub forma dicitur. Ita etiam ex hoc quod motus assumptionis naturae humanae terminatur ad personam, consequitur haec relatio quae unio dicitur. Unde unio medium est, non sicut assumptionem causans, sed potius eam consequens; sicut etiam aqua est medium in tactu, ex hoc quod tangentia sunt humectata."

⁵³ *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 7: "Unio . . . est relatio quaedam quae consideratur inter divinam naturam et humanam, secundum quod conveniunt in una Persona Filii Dei."

⁵⁴ Cf. Cajetan commenting on *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 7, n. III: "In hoc articulo cautissime adverte distinctionem praedictum de unione: vel quantum ad relationem, quam significat; vel quantum ad coniunctionem in persona, ad quam consequitur. Quoniam plus differunt haec duo quam caelum et terra. Unio enim pro relatione est in genere relationis, et est ens reale creatum, ut in littera dicitur. Unio autem pro coniunctione naturae humanae in persona divina, cum consistat in unitate quae est inter naturam humanam et personam Filii Dei, est in genere seu ordine substantiae: et non est aliquid creatum, sed Creator."

sacred assumed humanity by divine omnipotence; the Word and the assumed humanity are *one* and *identical* in this divine personal unity, which belongs to no created category since it is divine. Christ *is* God. These two senses of the Hypostatic Union, distinguished in this text, are not disparate, but are intimately connected, in so far as the relation of union follows the conjunction in personal identity and is explained by it. It is the simple statement of our Doctor: "The union of which we are speaking . . . is a relation . . . between the divine and the human nature . . . inasmuch as they come together in one Person of the Son of God."⁵⁵ We can sum all up in Cajetan's phrase: "In a word, the union of natures in Christ is a created relation, that is, following their personal uncreated unity."⁵⁶

Formally, the hypostatic union consists in the real relation of union to the Divine Person of the Word, a relation of dependence on the Word, and a relation of presence to the Word; but fundamentally, it consists in the personal conjunction, unity or identity of the sacred humanity to the Divine Person of the Word. It is this identity which ultimately provides the key to the whole union, dependence and presence; it is it alone which ultimately explains how the union is "of an order most elevated above the common supernatural order," as the Salmanticenses put it;⁵⁷ and it is it alone which ultimately explains how the Word, with all the fullness of the divinity, dwells in the humanity He has assumed.⁵⁸

This, for St. Thomas, is the concept of the positive communication of the Word to the sacred humanity. As is clear from our layout of our problem, it must be the guiding principle of our inquiry concerning an efficient or a formal causality exerted by the Word in the hypostatic union.

⁵⁵ *Summa Theol.*, *loc. cit.*, "Unio de qua loquimur . . . est relatio quaedam . . . inter divinam naturam et humanam . . . secundum quod convenient in una Persona Filii Dei."

⁵⁶ Cajetan, *loc. cit.*: "Est igitur ut in unico verbo dicatur, unio naturarum in Christo relatio creata quaedam, hoc est, consequens earundem unitatem personalem increatam."

⁵⁷ *Cursus Theologicus*, tr. xvi, disp. 2, n. 22, ed. Pauli Monti, Parmae, 1725, p. 207.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Haurietis Aquas*, cited in n. 36.

The divine personality of the Word and the divine existence.

So far we have established the basic concept of *identity* of the sacred humanity with the Word in the order of personality and the whole fullness of the Godhead. We must now ask under what formal aspect the sacred humanity is thus united and identified with the Word and the Godhead. Here we will see the premisses from which deductions will later be made concerning our precise problem of a causality of the Word in the Incarnation.

There can be no doubt that neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but the Person of the Word alone is incarnate.⁵⁹ There can be no doubt also that the divinity itself, that is to say, the divine substance or divine nature, is incarnate.⁶⁰ This is not to place two Incarnations, or two Unions, but one, for the divinity is incarnate in the Son,⁶¹ and the whole and entire divine nature is united to the sacred humanity in the Person of the Word.⁶² Thus there is only one termination of the humanity, only one identity and union, which is the Hypostatic Union to the Word.⁶³

This union, however, is solely with the Divine Word and with the divine perfection which He is, as the Person of the assumed humanity.⁶⁴ It is, therefore, a union formally in the line of the exclusive divine personality of the Word, as communicated and supplying the positive perfection of human personality in the assumed humanity. Materially, it is a union with all the divine

⁵⁹ Cf. the Profession of faith prescribed for the Waldenses by Innocent III: "Incarnationem divinitatis non in Patre, neque in Spiritu Sancto, factam, sed in Filio tantum, corde credimus et ore confitemur." (Denz. n. 422; PL 215, col. 1511).

⁶⁰ Cf. Concilium Rhemense: "Credimus (et confitemur) ipsam divinitatem, sive naturam dicas, incarnatam esse sed in Filio." (Denz. n. 392; Mansi, 21, col. 713).

⁶¹ Cf. the sources cited in nn. 59-60.

⁶² Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 3, a. 4: "Sicut dicimus personam Filii incarnatam, ita et naturam: 'Tota enim divina natura in una suarum hypostasum incarnata est,' ut dicit Damascenus in 3 lib." For St. John Damascene Cf. *De Fide Orthodoxa*, lib. III, c. 6; PG 94, col. 1003.

⁶³ Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, in IIIam partem, l.c., q. 2, disp. 6, art. 2, n. 5, n. 8.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

substance and perfection, which are materially united with the Divine Person of the Word.

Neither the concept of a formal union with the divine personality of the Word, nor that of a material union with the divine perfection which is one with it, cause great difficulty to the theologian. They are simply an expression of the central mystery of the Incarnation, and an elaboration of the values of the definition of Chalcedon: they remain mysterious, but they involve no special theological difficulty beyond the fundamental explanations of the mystery itself.

Many theologians, however, and with them the majority of the commentators on St. Thomas, have asserted that in the Hypostatic Union there is also a formal union of the sacred humanity to the divine existence, their reason being that such a union is implied in the idea of a formal union with the divine personality of the Word.⁶⁵ This concept is later used as a premiss by some who maintain an exclusive efficiency of the Word in the Incarnation.

It brings with it, however, a difficulty concerning the unity of the Three Divine Persons. The divine existence is one and common to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: how then can it be formally communicated to the sacred humanity, without the Three Divine Persons being formally communicated to that humanity? In answer, those who maintain such a formal union of the divine existence to Christ's humanity, in the place of any human connatural existence, propose a distinction. They state two formal aspects under which the one and same divine existence may be considered: either in so far as it belongs to the divine nature, or in so far as it belongs to the divine Person of the Word. They insist that these two aspects are formally different.

The concepts of divine nature and divine person are analogous applications to the deity of the notions of nature and person in general. In human things nature signifies formally the principle by which a thing is specifically such, by which it

⁶⁵ Cf. Cajetan, *op. cit.*, III, q. 17, a. 2.

is intelligible, and by which it operates.⁶⁶ When we apply this to divine things, we say that the divine nature, precisely and formally as a nature, is that real principle by which the divine reality is divine in its specific character, in its intelligibility, and in its power to operate. We know, too, that for St. Thomas, the note which primarily and principally distinguishes the divine nature from every other nature, is that the divine essence is identical with its own divine existence.⁶⁷ Therefore, we can validly say that the divine existence itself, the divine act of standing *extra causas*, formally belongs to the divine nature, or to that divine principle by which the divine being is divine.

Moreover, in human things, we say that a person is formally not the principle by which a thing is specifically such, and intelligible and able to operate, but something distinct in human nature, something properly susceptible of its own existence.⁶⁸ Person therefore signifies formally the nature as distinct and susceptible of its own existence, and in a secondary way, it formally signifies the proper existence of that nature as the essential term of reference of the person.⁶⁹ In the notion of person, therefore, personality is immediately and formally signified, and existence, that is, proper and substantial existence, is secondarily and indirectly, but still formally, signified: the former as the formal constitutive of the person, the latter, as the extrinsic term necessarily and essentially connotated.

When we apply this notion of person analogously to divine realities, we must say that a divine person does not signify formally the divine principle by which the deity is divine, but something distinct in the divine nature itself, something stand-

⁶⁶ Cf. St. Thomas, *In VII Metaphys.*, 1032a, 12, lect. 6, n. 1381.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 3, a. 4; q. 13, a. 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, I, q. 29, a. 3, "Persona est quid subsistens in rationali natura," and the discussion of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Christo Salvatore* (Torino: 1945), pp. 87 ff.

⁶⁹ We do not defend in this essay any determined opinion on the formal constitutive of personality, beyond that common to thomism. We hold then that it is a positive perfection distinct from the individual substantial nature, and that it is either that nature as connotating and related actually to its proper existence (Capreolus as interpreted by recent authors) or a substantial mode superadded to the nature as a "terminus ut sic purus" which founds this connotation. (Cajetan and the main line of thomist tradition.)

ing in its own right as a divine reality.⁷⁰ Each of the Three Divine Persons, then, precisely and formally as a person, signifies formally and directly that distinct subsistence which is its own distinct personality. Yet it signifies also—and again formally—the divine existence itself as the divine act towards which its distinctness and its standing in its own right are oriented, not indeed as a determinant of itself, but as a concomitant to the full formal notion of being a distinct divine thing. The divine existence then must pertain to the formal integral notion of each of the Three Divine Persons. The fact that each of these three Persons has its own distinct personality and subsistence, and yet shares with the other Two the one common divine existence, is simply the sacred enigma of the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

There are then, two formal aspects under which the one divine existence may be considered: as it formally belongs to the divine nature, and as it formally belongs to the divine person of the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit. In the Incarnation, when we speak of the divine existence being formally and properly communicated to the sacred humanity, we can consider it in two ways: either as it formally belongs to the divine nature, and then we would have a union to achieve a common divine-human nature, which is Monophysitism; or as it formally belongs to the Divine Person of the Word, as a formal concomitant to the integral notion of “person” as applied to the Word, as given to the sacred humanity in, with, and through the Word itself—and then we would remain strictly within the limits of a union to achieve full oneness of person between the Word and the sacred humanity. This latter is the concept of the positive communication of the Word to the sacred humanity in the line of existence. It is the teaching of many of the classic commentators on St. Thomas after Cajetan.⁷¹ It

⁷⁰ Just as person is general is “quid subsistens in rationali natura,” so person analogously applied to divine realities signifies “quid subsistens in divina natura.”

⁷¹ The classic commentators from Cajetan to Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange in an unbroken line support the theory of a unique divine existence in Christ. In the past decade this view has been subject to much criticism; the articles of Dom

appears also as the clear sense of St. Thomas himself, both in the commentary on the *Sentences*, and in the *Tertia Pars*. In the first work, he makes the objection:

There is one existence of the Son of God and of the Father; if, therefore, there is one existence of this man and of the Son of God, there will be one existence of this man and of God the Father. But there is no greater union than that by which things are one in existence. Therefore humanity is united to God the Father.⁷²

And he replies:

It is different with God, and with all other things. Because in God nature is subsisting; whence existence belongs to it *secundum se*: indeed it is its own subsisting existence; and therefore the existence of the nature is the existence of the person; and yet person and nature differ in reason. Although, therefore, there is one existence, yet it can be considered either as it is of the nature, and thus humanity is not united in divine existence; whence it is not united to the Father; or it can be considered as it is the existence of the person, and so it is united in divine existence.⁷³

The teaching of the *Summa* appears to rely on the same distinction:

It would seem that the union of the Incarnate Word did not take place in the person. For the Person of God is not distinct from His Nature. If, therefore, the union did not take place in the nature, it follows that it did not take place in the person.

. . . although in God, Nature and Person are not really distinct,

Diepen, O.S.B., in *Revue Thomiste* represent its most extensive and penetrating form. We shall later discuss his thought, although the scope of our essay does not require us to express our mind on this precise point.

⁷² Cf. III *Sent.*, d. 6, q. 2, a. 2: "Unum est esse Filii Dei et Patris, si ergo unum esse est huius hominis et Filii Dei, unum erit esse huius hominis et Dei Patris. Sed nulla est maior unio quam ea quae est aliquorum secundum esse unum. Ergo humanitas est unita Deo Patri."

⁷³ *Ibid.*: ". . . aliud est de Deo et de aliis omnibus rebus. Quia in Deo essentia subsistens est; unde sibi secundum se debetur esse; immo ipsa est suum esse subsistens; unde essentia a persona non differt secundum rem; et ideo esse essentiae est etiam esse personae; et tamen persona et essentia ratione differunt. Quamvis igitur unum sit esse, tamen potest considerari vel prout est essentiae, et sic non unitur humanitas in esse divino; unde non unitur Patri; vel potest considerari secundum quod est esse personae, et sic unitur in esse Divino."

yet they have distinct meanings, as was said above, inasmuch as person signifies after the manner of something subsisting. And because human nature is united to the Word, so that the Word subsists in it, and not so that His nature receives therefrom any addition or change, it follows that the union of human nature to the Word of God took place in the person and not in the nature.⁷⁴

In outlining this thesis, we have not intended to embrace it or to present for it arguments which might be definitive in the light of actual controversy among Thomists. Fully aware of the discussions still going on among commentators on St. Thomas, we have wished to give the clear basis of this view, from which arguments vital to our direct purpose in this essay depart. We believe that its correct understanding, as the view of the many Thomist authors who hold it, is vital to our remarks concerning extensive applications of it to the divine efficiency; and we believe that its key lies in the *dual formal signification of the divine existence*, either as pertaining to the divine nature, or as pertaining to the divine person of the Word.

The divine personality of the Word and the absolute divine subsistence.

Though they may dispute about a formal communication of the Word to the assumed humanity in the line of existence, Thomists will be in accord in assigning such a formal communication in the line of personality itself. But when we ask what constitutes formally and primarily the divine personality of the Word, we ask a difficult question and we find even Thomist authorities divided. It will be necessary to outline these divergences of interpretation if we are to understand later their application to our direct problems.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 2, ad. 2: "Videtur quod unio Verbi Incarnati non sit facta in persona. Persona enim Dei non est aliud a natura ipsius . . . Si ergo unio non est facta in natura, sequitur quod non sit facta in persona . . .

" . . . licet in Deo non sit aliud secundum rem natura et persona; differt tamen secundum modum significandi, sicut dictum est; quia persona significat per modum subsistentis. Et quia natura humana sic unitur Verbo, ut Verbum in ea subsistat, non autem ut aliquid addatur ei ad rationem suae naturae, vel ut eius natura in aliquid transmutetur; et ideo unio humane naturae ad Verbum Dei facta est in persona, non in natura."

We must first introduce a term: "absolute divine subsistence." Thomists commonly admit such a subsistence in God besides the relative subsistences or the relative personalities of the Three Divine Persons. It signifies a substantial divine perfection, a totality, and a completeness of the divine reality, but it does not signify that perfection, totality and completeness as incommunicable with the ultimate incommunicability of a person. A problem therefore arises, how does this absolute divine subsistence enter into the constitution of the divine relative subsistence and personality of each of the Three Divine Persons? That it is the radical explanation of these personalities, is clear; but the difficulty comes precisely from the view of many Thomists that it is the precise formal constituent of these personalities.

Billot and others who place the formal constitutive of human personality in existence itself, say that the relative subsistence of each of the divine relations is constituted formally and properly by the absolute divine subsistence, not indeed as absolute—this would hardly leave a Trinity of persons—but as possessed and contained by the divine relation itself.⁷⁵ For Billot too the absolute divine subsistence which thus constitutes the divine personalities, is none other than the divine existence.⁷⁶

Many early Thomists, who differ from Billot on the formal constitutive of created personality, at least according to authenticated modern research,⁷⁷ none the less retain a similar manner of speaking in determining the divine personalities of the Trinity. They sustain that the divine absolute subsistence is the whole reason of the subsistence of the divine relation,

⁷⁵ Cf. Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato* (Romae: 1927), Thesis xi, p. 177 sqq.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* This follows from his concept of the formal constitutive of created personality, which is placed in the act of existence Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁷⁷ Cf. F. P. Muniz, O.P., "El constitutivo formal de la persona creada en la tradicion tomista," in *Ciencia Tomista*, 70 (1945), pp. 5-89. G. Fraile, O.P., *Ciencia Tomista* 67 (1944), pp. 129-199; R. Verardo, O.P. in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza) 52 (1949), pp. 228 sqq. The import of these and other studies is that the formal constitutive of personality in Capreolus (and the pre-Cajetan thomists) is expressed by a real connotation of proper existence in the substantial nature, by which it supports and holds that existence; not the act of existence itself.

but that the relative opposition of the relations one to the other is the whole reason of their distinctness: so that the very relativity of the subsisting relation is no more than a necessary condition of its distinction from its relative opposite, and the relation really and properly subsists by the absolute divine subsistence.⁷⁸

Many other Thomists, largely after Cajetan, do not adopt this expression.⁷⁹ They say that the divine relation subsists precisely and formally, not by the common and absolute divine subsistence, but by itself formally, in so far as it is a divine relation. Through the divine nature and through its absolute subsistence the divine relation has its own subsistence radically but not formally; on the contrary, it itself vindicates to itself its own subsistence in so far as it is a divine relation; that is, in so far as it is a real divine relativity, it is a primary relative reality, and a primary relative personal reality. Thus the formal constituent of the divine relative personality is the divine relativity itself, not simply as a relativity, not simply as divine, but as *a divine relativity*.⁸⁰

If then, we say that there is a positive communication of the Word to the assumed humanity in the formal line of personality, then we must accurately determine the exact proper part of the Word, and the exact part of the common divine subsistence, in this communication. Neither Billot, nor the early Thomists, nor Cajetan would contemplate any communication other than of the Word and in the Word alone.⁸¹ But their explanations of what is the divine personality of the Word, can in each case lead to difficulty concerning the mode of this communication.

⁷⁸ For a summary of these opinions Cf. A. Michel, in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, VII, coll. 1520-1522, and *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, XV, coll. 1814 sq.

⁷⁹ Cf. Cajetan, in I, q. 40, a. 4, nn. 9-10.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 9: ". . . Et sic relatio illa, non inquantum relatio (quia sic conveniret omni relationi) sed in quantum illa, idest, in quantum res relativa hypostatica et prima, constituit personam. . . ."

⁸¹ It is clear that theological explanation always follows and accepts the teaching of the founts of divine revelation, proposed by the *Magisterium*.

Billot and the early Thomists would invoke a formal communication in the line of the absolute divine subsistence. To the objection that this involves a communication of the common divine essence and hence of the Three Persons, they invoke the distinction outlined above concerning the divine existence itself: the absolute subsistence has a dual formal aspect, as pertaining to the divine nature, and as pertaining to each of the three Persons. It is in the second way that they ascribe it to the sacred humanity in the positive communication of the hypostatic union.

Cajetan, however, has little need of this distinction, because he contemplates a positive communication of the proper distinct subsistence of the Word formally and directly to the sacred humanity. If he posits at all a formal communication in the line of the absolute subsistence, then he will make use of the same distinction, between the absolute subsistence as common and belonging to the divine nature, and the absolute subsistence as belonging formally to the divine relative subsistence as its foundation and root.

At first sight it would seem that any difficulty here is merely an extension of the difficulty of which we have spoken already concerning the divine existence, and is solved by every group of Thomists with essentially the same distinction. However, there are grounds for thinking that the difficulty here is deeper, precisely because of the explanation of Billot and of the early Thomists.

The consideration of the absolute subsistence as common and belonging to the Three Persons, seems to be a consideration of it as it is in itself. We add to this as a distinct formal consideration, the consideration of it as pertaining to the distinct Person of the Word. But in the view of Billot and of the early Thomists, this subsistence, precisely according to what it is in itself, constitutes the distinct subsistence of the Word which is its personality. Is it valid then to say that the consideration of it as it is in itself, formally differs from the consideration of it as it pertains to the Person of the Word? This difficulty seems to be perfectly evaded by Cajetan; the other two views

seem open to it. Hence we may suspect that there could be here the root of a divergence later in extending the view of a positive communication of the divine absolute subsistence to a positive communication of the divine efficient premotion.

There is, however, a reply to the difficulty. It consists in making clear what is meant by the absolute divine subsistence. The early Thomists look on this as something prescinding from all determined pertinence either to the divine nature as common, or to the divine relations as distinct. They know of the Three Divine Persons from divine faith; and they accept as an explanation of sacred theology prior to this question the identification of the Three Divine Persons with the three divine and distinct relations.⁸² They have then, two distinct points of reference to which to refer their indeterminate concepts of divine absolute subsistence: either to the divine nature conceived as common, or to the divine relation conceived as distinct. Thus the common general notions of nature and person applied to divine things appear to be the points of departure for a dual formal consideration of the divine absolute subsistence, and the difficulty seems to be solved.

A parallel response could be made for those who with Billot identify this divine absolute subsistence with the divine existence. Again, a dual formal consideration would remain.

The result is that we can take *as common Thomist ground* the satisfactory explanation of how the divine existence and divine absolute subsistence are communicated by the Word to the sacred humanity. We can go on to use this point as the starting point of a possible extension to a communication of the divine efficiency in the Word alone.

Before we do so, we must sound one note of warning. Despite all difficulties which could be raised, Thomist authors, whatever their particular explanations, have united in insisting that the dual formal consideration of divine existence and divine absolute subsistence is the *conditio sine qua non* of any

⁸² Again, what is clear and common ground among theologians is assumed and accepted before particular theories which attempt to probe it further.

communication of them to the sacred humanity in and through any one single Divine Person. We must therefore take as a major premiss for the possible extension to the communication of the divine reality under any other formal aspect, to the sacred humanity in and through the Word alone, that no such perfection can be so communicated *unless* it too bears the same dual formal consideration. We must find in any such perfection under discussion a true pertinence to the Word, and to the Word alone. It is distinctly possible that a false extension from these premisses could be made if the initial difficulties of the premisses themselves, and the basic explanations of the older authors, are not fully appreciated.

We have now prepared the way for a direct discussion of the problem of the exclusive causality of the Word in the Incarnation. We can see in the light of the mind and principles of St. Thomas what *the mystery of the presence of the Word* to the sacred humanity involves; we can see its divine character, and its exclusive character. In this mystery of the presence of the Word, St. Thomas has done nothing more than show us the harmony between the great mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation; a harmony he has seen so clearly because of his unqualified acceptance of each mystery—because he saw as far as he could what it meant for a human reality to be the Person of the Son of God, because he saw, again *pro modulo humano*, what it meant for Three distinct subsisting divine Persons to be One in the unity of the same divine nature.

From this mystery of the presence of the Word, St. Thomas has, we believe, excluded any idea of an exclusive efficiency of the Word. After resuming his teaching on this point, it will now be our task to complete his picture of this presence, by finding the ultimate reason which excludes from it this exclusive efficiency.

No exclusive influence: the teaching of St. Thomas.

We may now resume the direct teaching of Saint Thomas on the divine efficiency common to the Three Divine Persons.

The Angelic Doctor insists that every divine influence *ad extra* always comes from the divine essence in so far as it is something absolute, as from its *principium quo*. In the *Prima Pars* the whole divine government and motion *ad extra* are reduced to the divine providence and ultimately to the divine will and science; these are clearly attributes of the divine essence in so far as it is absolute.⁸³

Further, St. Thomas teaches that every divine efficient influence *ad extra* comes not merely from the divine essence as absolute as from its *principium quo*, but from that essence as common to the Three Divine Persons. The principle governing St. Thomas' thought is none other than: *Omnia sunt unum in divinis ubi non obviat relationis oppositio*; he merely insists that where there is a question of the divine essence as absolute, such a relative opposition cannot exist.⁸⁴ This doctrine is expressly applied to the human activity of the Word in the *Tertia Pars*.⁸⁵

Thirdly, St. Thomas goes on to teach that every divine efficient influence, belonging as it does to the divine essence as common as to its *principium quo*, belongs to the undivided Deity as to its *principium quod*. Thus he says that "the divine essence creates, governs and performs other functions of this kind."⁸⁶ and that the creative divine action "is the work of the divine essence, whence it is the work of the indistinct supposit, inasmuch as essence signifies that which is, as by the

⁸³ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, qq. 14, 19, 22, 25, *passim*.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, q. 45, a. 6: ". . . creare est proprie causare, sive producere esse rerum. Cum autem omne agens agat sibi simile, principium actionis considerari potest ex actionis effectu: ignis enim est, qui generat ignem. Et ideo creare convenit Deo secundum suum esse, quod est eius essentia, quae est communis tribus personis. Unde creare non est proprium alicui personae, sed commune toti Trinitati . . ."

⁸⁵ We shall not attempt here the exegesis made by St. Thomas of the patristic texts (Cf. note 41) concerning the premoving efficiency over the sacred humanity. The conclusions of Cajetan, classic among thomists, express his mind: "Esse Redemptorem immediate est proprium Christi inquantum homo; . . . Redemptio potest attribui toti Trinitati ut primae causae." (In III, q. 48, a. 5, n. 1.)

⁸⁶ Cf. I *Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 1: ". . . essentia divina creat, gubernat, et huiusmodi. . ."

name "God."⁸⁷ The sense of this affirmation is neither that the divine essence and not the Three Divine Persons is the *principium quod* which acts *ad extra*, nor that the divine persons as distinct from one another are this principle, but that the Three Persons, namely Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are this principle inasfar as they are identical with one common divine essence.⁸⁸

It cannot be doubted then that the Three Persons equally and with absolute indivision are the one divine principle which acts *ad extra*.⁸⁹

No exclusive efficiency: the basic reason of St. Thomas.

The first two points we have outlined above from St. Thomas depend on his concept of efficient causality itself. This notion is well resumed by John of St. Thomas, when, in his *Cursus Philosophicus*, he says:

Action as causality in the formality of causing is not a relation but something absolute in the predicament of action.

Action formally is not the causality of an agent as it connotes motion or order to the patient, although it includes it as it is predicamental action; nor as it bespeaks becoming *passively accepted* on the part of the effect, but as it is the second act of the

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, d. 29, q. 1, a. 4, ad 2: "... est opus suppositi indistincti, prout essentia significat id quod est, ut hoc nomine Deus."

⁸⁸ Cf. Billuart, *De Deo Trino* (Parisiis: 1876), p. 523. Cf. also M. Cuervo, O.P., in *Ciencia Tomista*, 82 (1955) pp. 105-123.

⁸⁹ The Salmanticenses discuss the question, *Tractatus Theologici*, tom. iv, tract. xvi, disp. 2, dub. 2, n. 19 sq. They are arguing against two theologians of little note, Carolus Franciscus Raconsi (Cf. Hurter, *Nomenclator*, tom. 1, p. 403, not. 1), and Antonius de la Parra (cf. *Ibid.*, tom. 2, col. 9). The question is "an Verbum divinum praestet aliquem influxum activum specialem in hoc mysterium?" and they reply: "... primo ... virtus per quam praestaret talem influxum, non est absoluta, quia omne absolutum commune est tribus personis; nec relativa, tum quia relatio ad intra non est virtus proxima influxus activi, sed intellectus et voluntas; tum etiam quia relatio non constituit principium quo, sed quod, operationis; ergo nequit esse virtus qua praestet talem influxum. Secundo: nam virtus per quam Deus proxime influit ad extra, est omnipotentia; ergo vel est eadem in Filio ac in Patre, vel non? Si est eadem ergo influxus est idem. Si est diversa, ergo sunt tres omnipotentes" (n. 21).

agent, which is the emanation itself or the becoming actively taken and according to the denomination "from." ⁹⁰

If then the efficient causality of an agent, formally as such, is something absolute, it follows that analogously the efficient causality of the divine Agent is something absolute, and hence is reduced to the divine Essence as something absolute. If, too, active efficient causality denotes the second act of an agent, it follows that we may consider, all proportion guarded, the active divine efficiency *ad extra* as the second act of the divine Agent, which in God is nothing else than the unchangeable divine essence, or the divine essence as immutable and absolute. If, again, this causality denotes the second act of an agent according to the denomination "from," it follows that the divine efficiency is not only ascribed to the divine essence as absolute, but also that it is ascribed to it precisely in the denomination "from," that is, as to the principle from which, (*quo*), it comes. This is the basic reason for St. Thomas' teaching on the unity of the principle *quo* of the divine action *ad extra*.

The third point we made above from St. Thomas, namely that this divine action must also be ascribed to the common divine essence as its principle *quod*, the principle which produces it, and so cannot pertain to a distinct person to the exclusion of the others, demands close investigation. From what we have written concerning the divine existence and the divine absolute subsistence, it is clear that this divine action, and indeed the divine essence formally as its *principium quo*, could in truth belong to a distinct person in this way, *provided* it possessed a twofold formal consideration: one as belonging to the divine essence in itself as common, and another as be-

⁹⁰ Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, Philosophia Naturalis. (ed. Reiser) tom. ii, pp. 264-265. "Actio ut causalitas formalitate causandi non est relatio sed aliquid absolutum, de praedicamento actionis. . . . Actio non est formaliter causalitas agentis, secundum quod connotat motum, seu ordinem ad passum, licet illud includat, ut est actio praedicamentalis, neque ut dicit fieri ex parte effectus, passive acceptum, sed ut dicit actum secundum ipsius agentis, qui est ipsa emanatio seu fieri active, et secundum denominationem 'ab'."

longing to the formal constitution of that divine Person. Hence to penetrate into St. Thomas' negative attitude here, we must show how and why such a twofold formal consideration is impossible; we must see the reason why it cannot formally pertain to the formal constitution of the Divine Persons.

We think the reason lies in the analogous application of the universal concept of personality to the divine order. The mind of all Thomist tradition is that action, efficient causality, indicates a perfection beyond the fully constituted order of being. It is a perfection which does not belong to the constitution of a nature in that complete and perfect mode of substantiality which is personality; neither is it a perfection which places that nature in a perfect state of existence. Supposing a nature already complete in its species, personality, and existence, it perfects it in a further and additional way which is called accidental. It is the person which acts; but it is not by reason of the personality, but by reason of its nature, that operation may belong to it. By force of its nature the person has the potentiality to further perfection which is operation. Precisely as a person, by force of its personality, its potentiality is already fully actuated by the act of actual existence. This is what is meant when it is said that it is a person which, properly speaking, acts, but according to its nature and by reason of its nature.⁹¹ The person, fully achieved in its formal constitution already in the order of being, is the *primum positum* and the radical supposition of the further order of operation.

When we speak, *in divinis*, of the divine absolute subsistence, or of the divine existence, as going to make up divine personality in a formal way (either constitutively or integrally), we are always speaking within the order of being; we are preserving the analogy with created personality which is fully achieved formally in that order. But to suggest that *the divine action ad extra*, or the *divine essence as its principle quo*, could bear a twofold formal consideration, one as pertaining to the divine nature, and the other as pertaining to the formal make-up of

⁹¹ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II, q. 19, p. 1, ad 4.

the distinct divine persons, is to move *outside the order of being into the order of operation*; it is no longer to preserve the fundamental analogy in speaking of divine personality itself.

This, we think, is why Saint Thomas has constantly refused to speak of a divine action *ad extra*, a divine efficiency *ad extra*, which is proper and exclusive to one Divine Person.

We feel that this conclusion will stand, no matter what division of thought among the followers of St. Thomas is preferred on the question of the constitution of the divine personalities. The restriction of the formal constitution of personality to the order of being is common to Thomism.

We believe then that there is no efficient divine influence exclusive to the Word; we must now discuss the possibility of a formal influence exclusive to Him.

III. THE CONCEPT OF FORMAL ACTUATION BY THE WORD.

We must now ask whether or not we may speak of a true formal causality in the mysterious and hidden identity of the sacred humanity of Christ with the Divine Person of the Word. We must look into the wonderful *consortium* established between Christ's humanity and the Divine Word; we must investigate the way in which that humanity is perfected in becoming the humanity of the Word.

A formal cause in the strict sense means intrinsic act determining and specifying material cause. Philosophers indicate two kinds of formal cause: the substantial form, which is the act of prime matter, and the accidental form, which is the act of second matter. In each case we have an act received into matter, into potency, and this act we call a form. Hence every act received into potency, even though it be neither substantial nor accidental form, may be called reductively a form, in so far as it participates something peculiar to a form. In this way existence, which is the act of essence, is called formal with respect to its essence. We find therefore a twofold element in formal causality: the element of *perfectivity* by intrinsic act

and perfection, and the element of *reception and limitation* of this perfection by the thing it perfects.⁹²

In the Mystery of the Incarnation, the divine Person of the Word can in no way be called the substantial form of the sacred humanity; nor is He an accidental form received into that humanity as in a subject: such ideas would be heretical.⁹³ Nor does the Personality of the Word come to the sacred humanity exactly as created personality comes to its intellectual nature; for created personality is in some way received and limited by its nature; and the Divine Personality of the Word can neither be received nor limited, knowing neither limit or term in the perpetual eternity in which it always is.

Thus it seems that there is no room for a formal causality on the part of the Word in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Yet the opposite is true. And in attempting to grasp it, let us remember that we are dealing with the highest mysteries of Divine Revelation, and so we must not be limited by the lowly modes and categories of earthly things, but must turn to extensive and analogous amplifications of familiar concepts, in a feeble attempt to explain in some way the deep things of God.

Many commentators on Saint Thomas have spoken of a formal causality of the Word over the humanity of Christ, present in that mysterious conjunction by which the Word and the sacred humanity are one in the unity of Person. They speak of a certain analogous mode of formal causality which is sublime and supererminent. This is the thought of Cajetan, Bannez, John of Saint Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet and Billuart; it is echoed among more recent writers by Del Prado, Penido, Billot, Hugon, Michel, Garrigou-Lagrange, Daffara, Ramirez, Gillon, and Corvez.⁹⁴ They propose this teaching as

⁹² Cf. Gredt, O.S.B., *Elementa Philosophiae Aristotelico-Thomisticae*. (Friburgi: 1929), II, n. 751 sqq.; John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, *Philosophia Naturalis*, q. XI, a. II, p. 233 sqq.

⁹³ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 6.

⁹⁴ Cajetan, commenting on I, q. 12, a. 2, nn. 15-16, on III, q. 4, a. 2, and especially on III, q. 17, a. 2, n. 18 sqq. We have already cited the other references in Note 25; to them we add the article of Père L. B. Gillon, O.P., in *Dictionnaire de*

a profound contemplation of the mystery of God in human flesh, entirely in accord with the thought of the Angelic Doctor.

These authors speak of a sublime, supereminent, analogous mode of formal causality. In this mode, act or perfection is said to perfect something distinct and other than itself in such a way that it is in no way received by it; it is a pure perfectivity. The act is said to perfect the thing it perfects, without depending on it in the exercise of its perfectivity; without, by the fact of its perfectivity, forming with it a third nature; without itself becoming more perfect by the fact that it perfects another. Hence this mode of formal cause retains everything which belongs to the element of *perfectivity* in commonly conceived formal causality; while at the same time, it is entirely cut off and purified from everything which savours of *imperfection* in this causality. Hence authors term this mode of formal causality, "quasi-formal,"⁹⁵ "reductively formal,"⁹⁶ or "in some way formal,"⁹⁷ to show that it does not preserve all the elements of common formal causality. It is also called pure actuation, *simpliciter perfective* formal causality, purely *terminative* formal cause, to show the height of purity and nobility which belongs to its way of perfecting; for it fulfills the offices of a formal cause in a higher way. There are then likenesses and unlikenesses between it and commonly conceived formal

Théologie Catholique, XV(I), 1946, coll. 659-660, which does not treat directly of the Incarnation, but is most useful for the notion of pure formal actuation in St. Thomas. The principal citation from Cajetan deserves at least partial transcription: "Et quia humanitas Christi non est terminata propria personalitate, sed personalitate Verbi, ideo non convenit sibi actuari per existentiam. Et haec intellige, loquendo de actuare et actuari per modum inhaesionis. Nam si de actuare et actuari *infra totam latitudinem suorum modorum* sermo sit, non est remotum a philosophia divina Deum posse actuare rem creatam. In cuius signum, divinam essentiam esse actum cuiusque intellectus videntis ipsam, et theologi et philosophi fatentur. Cum ergo naturam humanam in Christo ex divina personalitate et esse divino perfici fateamur, non est absonum fateri etiam, quod actuatur aliquo etiam modo per personalitatem et esse divinum. Et ex hac personalitate communicata humanitati Christi, perfecta est humanitas illa multo plus quam quaecumque pars perficiatur per hoc quod advenit suo toti; acquisivit enim perfectionem infinitam, acquirendo personalitatem infinitam. . . ." (III, 17, 2, n. 18.)

⁹⁵ Cf. Billot, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁶ Michel, *loc. cit.*

⁹⁷ Cf. Ramirez, *loc. cit.*

causality; we can say that we are dealing with an analogous mode of formal cause.

Our authors apply this notion of pure formal actuation to the function of the Word in the Incarnation; but first of all they show how it is applicable to the Deity itself.

Our minds can distinguish the concept of purely "*perfecting*," from the concept of "*being received*," which always accompanies formal perfecting as we are accustomed to it in the natural order. To have a concrete case of pure perfectivity, of pure formal actuation, without any mixture of reception, our minds demand that the form of act or perfection concerned be absolutely and utterly perfect; further, that this form be so perfect that it can be neither added to, nor taken from, by being communicated to something else. Clearly, this perfection can only exist in the Pure Act which is God. We can see then the real non-impossibility of this mode of pure formal actuation without any mixture of reception and dependence, if, by a divine miracle, God Himself were to become immediately present with His infinite perfection to something distinct from and other than Himself, precisely as that thing's perfection. This would in no way be repugnant to God, but would befit Him in the highest degree in so far as He is the highest perfection; nor would it be a violation of the nature of the thing perfected, but a mystery of unspeakable dignity and elevation.

In the Hypostatic Union, the Divine Personality of the Word by which the humanity of Christ subsists, is that Pure Act which alone can perfect by such a pure formal actuation. In this union, although the Word is conjoined and communicated to this humanity in an ineffable personal unity, It is in no way received or limited, It is in no way restricted and It does not inhere. On the one hand It leaves the sacred humanity integrally perfect as a nature and distinct and other from Its divine self as a nature. On the other hand, It confers on it that firmness, consistence, ontological completeness and standing which the positive perfection of personality implies. The wonderful intimacy of the hypostatic union, or rather the very identity of the humanity of Christ with the Word in indistinct

personality, implies then a mode of perfecting on the part of the Word, by which the Word, with the infinite perfection of Its own divine personality, is immediately present to the assumed humanity and totally communicates Itself to that humanity in the line of personality, leaving it at the same time perfectly distinct and wholly integral as a nature, and not Itself suffering any detriment by Its coming. This way of perfecting is called by our authors a true mode of formal causality; it is a *pure formal actuation*.⁹⁸

This view and this approach to the Incarnation may be illustrated by the likewise mysterious union of the blessed intellect with the divine essence in glory.⁹⁹ The divine essence, which the glorified intellect sees, is Pure Act. By the beatific vision, this divine essence is joined to the glorified intellect by an immediate presence in the intentional and intelligible order; it replaces the intelligible species and the created *verbum* or term of the vision; and so it is united to the mind in order to be its positive perfection. It is not received as in a subjective potency; it knows neither loss, nor mixture, nor limitation; but it comes to the glorified mind to illustrate, determine, and perfect it in an entirely pure way. It perfects the mind by a pure formal actuation which is true formal causality.

Other examples, more concrete indeed, and therefore less apt to express what must always remain mysterious, have been proposed by our authors. They speak of the way the apex of a pyramid terminates any line drawn on the surface of the pyramid towards it; of light radiating through a transparent medium; and of the ecstasy of the human soul, both in natural rapture, and especially in mystical transforming union with God.¹⁰⁰ Just as the apex of the pyramid seems to perfect any

⁹⁸ We have not found the phrase "pure formal actuation" as such in the authors from whom we have worked. It seems however to express concisely the essence of their concept: an actuation which belongs to formal causality, and which is purified of all imperfection.

⁹⁹ Cf. especially John of St. Thomas, Del Prado, and Ramirez, *locis citatis*.

¹⁰⁰ For these metaphors—admittedly deficient—cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *loc. cit.* There is perhaps a hint of the metaphor of the transparent medium of St. Thomas, *IV Sent.*, d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. and *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 1.

line which might be drawn towards it on the surface of the pyramid, without being received into it or being changed by it or perfected by it; just as the light of the sun resplendent in transparent glass seems to perfect that medium with its own dazzling splendour without being received or limited therein; just as the object of a man's thoughts and love in human ecstasy so occupies his mind and heart that he seems to become that thing and to be graced with its perfection and beauty, without that thing being changed or perfected itself; so also in the mystery of the Incarnation, the divine Person of the Word *perfects* without being in any way *received* or *limited*. From this last example the view of our authors has been called the "theory of ecstasy," in so far as it would contend that the humanity of Christ is snatched up to the divine Person of the Word in a singular ontological ecstasy of personality.

In the past decade, this view of so many eminent Thomists has been subjected to many critiques. It has been said to be inconsistent in itself, to take the real meaning out of the mystery of the Incarnation, and to be foreign to the texts and mind of the Angelic Doctor.¹⁰¹ The difficulties raised against it have been both speculative and historical; but principally speculative.

The basic speculative difficulty is taken from the principles expounded by Saint Thomas concerning the union of God with creatures in general; it contends that all the inconveniences—and they are many—which St. Thomas shows to be present in the pantheism of Almaric of Chartres are found again in the

¹⁰¹ This criticism has come chiefly from Dom H. M. Diepen, O.S.B., Père Jean-Hervé Nicolas, O.P., and Father Adrian Hastings. Dom Diepen has published many articles in the last decade on these matters, most of which have appeared in *Revue Thomiste*; the following numbers should be consulted especially in the present context: L (1950) pp. 112 sqq.; L (1950) pp. 291 sqq.; LIII (1953) pp. 41 sqq. Père Nicolas' comments, also in *Revue Thomiste*, are by way of recension of this work; Cf. LIII (1953) 427-428; and LV (1955) p. 182. Father Hastings has written an English presentation of the case, with some original reflections, in *Downside Review*, 1955, pp. 139-159. Other theologians have also noted the problem and its nuances.

theory of ecstasy.¹⁰² Saint Thomas has indeed written that God cannot be the act of any *quiddity* distinct from himself,¹⁰³ and yet this appears to be the cornerstone of the theory. Again, Saint Thomas has clearly and rightly rejected the idea that the Word and the sacred humanity might be parts of a composite resulting from the hypostatic union; yet the theory of pure formal actuation in the Incarnation seems to make the Word as it were a complement of the humanity of Christ, seems to make it a perfection belonging to the humanity of Christ, seems to postulate a whole, a *totum*, being formed between the two, towards which the Word Itself would be in potency.¹⁰⁴ Further, if a pure formal actuation of the sacred humanity is sustained not only in the line of personality but also in the line of existence, it seems difficult to preserve the true notion of a temporal generation of Christ. For in this case the Word, in uniting Himself to flesh, would not receive a new existence, but a new mode of existing; and to receive only a new mode of existing, and not a new existence, is not generation but alteration. Finally, even if a true temporal generation were sustained in this theory, the eternal God would

¹⁰² Dom Diepen has stressed this point many times. Cf. *Revue Thomiste* L (1950) pp. 112 sqq.; L (1950) pp. 291 sqq; and LIII (1953) pp. 41 sqq. Père Nicolas mentions it on p. 428 of his 1953 note, cited above, and Father Hastings on pp. 154-155 of his article. Dom Diepen always stresses the argument against an actuation precisely in the line of existence. In our essay, we treat it from the point of view of actuation in the real order, both of existence and personality. Hence we have departed from the order of presentation used by him. His thought may be gathered from the following condensation: "L'existence est le complément de l'essence créée. Mais L'Etre divin ne peut devenir le complément d'une nature. . . . L'Existence est spécifié par l'essence, nous y reviendrons, forma dicitur principium essendi. L'Etre divin aurait donc une cause quasiformelle. L'Existence est terme de la generation. . . . Sequetur quod sit terminus generationis, quod est falsum, cum ipse sit aeternus. . . . Dirait-on, pour sauver la situation, que la generation temporelle n'aboutit pas à une être neuf mais simplement à un nouveau mode d'être? Ce serait travestir l'idée de generation . . . Enfin, pour tout résumer, l'existence, sans être partie de l'essence, est pourtant quelque chose de la creature. . . . Si Dieu est l'existence du Christ, en tant qu'homme, Dieu est quelque chose du Christ en tant qu'Homme. . . . Deus in compositionem aliorum non venit." (1953, pp. 42-3)

¹⁰³ I *Contra Gent.*, c. 27.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

be its term: which seems impossible. These arguments are put forward on their own intrinsic worth, and as the mind of St. Thomas revealed in his texts.

Once the notion of pure formal actuation is clearly presented according to the minds of the Thomists who speak of it, there does not seem to be great intrinsic force in these arguments against it. The inconveniences of Almarician pantheism come from the compositive union of God with creatures, from the *reception* and *limitation* of God by the creature; and this is precisely what the theory of pure formal actuation avoids or seeks to avoid by its very formulation. Perhaps the most plausible of the arguments proposed is the insistence that there is a true composition required for pure formal actuation; which composition would be repugnant. This point has been seen clearly by Ferrariensis¹⁰⁵ and dealt with extensively by John of Saint Thomas.¹⁰⁶ The composition the latter sees between the humanity of Christ and the Word actuating it, is called composition as in number (*secundum numerum*), not composition as of parts (*secundum partes*). It is of the very essence of composition according to number to leave the thing perfected whole and entire in its nature, rather, to suppose it fully constituted in its nature. Moreover, this kind of purely perfective composition is not ordained to form a whole which is

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Ferrariensis, commenting on this passage of the CG, nn. 8-9, "... Sed licet non oporteat id quo aliquid operatur tanquam complemento virtutis, esse eius formam in essendo, oportet tamen ut aliquam cum ipso habeat unionem: si enim esset omnino separatum, non posset esse illi ratio agendi. Nam et essentia divina unitur intellectui Beati, inquantum utrumque est in anima; divina quidem essentia sicut operans in ipsam intrinsece, quo modo dicitur Deus in rebus esse; intellectus autem sicut eius proprietas." (n. 9) Perhaps the final phrase could be used as a significant commentary on the expression of St. Thomas and the Fathers, describing the sacred humanity as the *instrumentum proprium et coniunctum Verbi*.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, in I, q. 12: "... Et appellatur compositum ratione numeri, quando est compositio qua aliqua duo inter se communicant, sine ordinatione dependentiae ad unum tertium quod ex illis constituatur, sed solum resultat quod alterum extremum maneat perfectum et attractum ad esse alterius. Sic ergo ... resultat communicatio unius extremi ad alterum, quae est compositio ratione numeri ..."

greater and better than its parts, but produces a 'composite' precisely by drawing the thing perfected to an already existing and unchanging perfection. The only new reality which comes from such a perfective union is the new relation and *habitus* of the perfection to the thing it now perfects.¹⁰⁷

The argument drawn from the veracity of generation in Christ seems best answered by saying that we do not speak univocally of earthly things and of the deep things of God. The Word, in uniting Himself to flesh, acquires a new manner of existing in the creature, and this is sufficient to verify analogously the idea of generation; although in other merely human cases a new existence and not merely a new mode of existing would be required. The Word is sufficiently made the term of generation by being that to which the divinely generated humanity is drawn. This is the reply of Ferrariensis.¹⁰⁸

But the arguments objected to the theory of pure formal actuation appear to have a basis in the texts and mind of St. Thomas, especially in the *Summa Contra Gentes* where he refutes the pantheism of Almaric. In his commentary on these passages, we believe that Ferrariensis touches principles which

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, "Et ita cum natura humana conjungitur hypostatice Filio Dei, non advenit novum esse personale; sed solum nova habitudo esse personalis praeexistentis ad naturam humanam. Eodem modo, quando unitur esse intelligibile increatum intellectui, non resultat aliqua tertia natura, sed nova habitudo ipsius divinae essentiae ut intelligibilis, quatenus perficit illo esse intelligibili intellectum; et sic resultat intellectum esse perfectum intelligibiliter, sicut in Incarnatione quod humana natura sit terminata substantialiter."

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Ferrariensis in *I Cont. Gent.*, c. 26: "Dicitur quod, cum nondum sit facta mentio de trinitate divinarum Personarum, loquitur hic Sanctus Thomas de generatione secundum quod a philosophis accipitur. Apud ipsos autem dicitur aliquid simpliciter generari cum incipit in aliqua natura subsistere. . . . Hoc autem in naturalibus est cum res simpliciter incipit esse novumque esse accipit. . . . Apud theologos vero, aliquid incipit esse suppositum alicuius naturae et tamen non incipit simpliciter esse, sicut suppositum divinum incipit esse suppositum humanae naturae in eaque subsistere, et tamen non incipit simpliciter esse, cum aeternum habeat esse. . . . Unde illa propositio Sancti Thomae de mente philosophorum assumpta, non est vera nisi aliquid accipiat novum modum essendi, sive novam habitudinem, per hoc quod incipit esse suppositum alicuius naturae cuius prius non erat suppositum. Quod sane apud philosophos, inferiora haec considerantes, impossibile esset: apud theologos vero in Christo verum est. . . ."

are valid to explain satisfactorily everything St. Thomas says. Ferrariensis tries above all to find out what St. Thomas really means by the phrases he uses in the present context. Since we always attribute to the Angelic Doctor a formal way of speaking, we must remember that in replies to difficulties and in controversial writings he will look always to one formal point of difficulty and reply; and to one formal difficulty he will assign one formal reply. At times also he will use terms according to their ordinary meaning, in which they are clearly used by those with whom he argues, and he does not therefore deny that these terms may have a deeper analogous sense unsuspected by those whose opinions he now weighs. Hence, when he says that God cannot be the act of any *quiddity* distinct from Himself, or that God cannot come into composition with other things, or that God cannot be the term of generation, or that to receive a new manner of existing and not a new existence is not sufficient for generation, we believe that he is always speaking according to the common signification of the terms he uses; we can see no more than a use of these terms in the common sense in which the pantheists had used them; we cannot believe that he is here excluding the much deeper sense which might lie hidden in the terms when they are used in an attempt to explain the divine secrets of the Hypostatic Union. We believe then that the whole difficulty coming from an apparent likeness with Almarician pantheism can be adequately answered by those who profess that there is a pure formal actuation in the Incarnation.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Father Garrigou-Lagrange has also treated the difficulty in his *De Deo Uno*, where he speaks of the actuation of the divine essence in the beatific vision. He follows the explanations of Ferrariensis. From a close textual study of the passages where St. Thomas refutes Almaric and the closely related and equally unacceptable views of David de Dinando, in the light of the passages on the beatific vision where he seems to conceive the pure formal actuation, it could be suspected that St. Thomas, by the propriety of his expression, framed his replies to the pantheists so as to leave room for the further concepts of actuation; at least the texts taken in strict sense objectively seem to leave such room. The works of G. Théry, O.P., *Autour du décret de 1210*, I; *David de Dinant* (Le Saulchoir: 1925) and of Capelle, *idem*, II, *Amaury de Bene*, (Paris: 1932) are of value in this study. We prefer however to restrict ourselves to the traditional reply of Ferrariensis.

A second difficulty alleged against our theory is the danger of monophysitism. If the sacred humanity is so actuated, it must then be lacking in what goes to make a true human nature. This is urged especially against those who hold such an actuation in the line of existence. Its existence, it is said, cannot be truly human, unless it be determined, specified and exercised by a human essence which limits it. To say with the theory of ecstasy which sustains a pure formal actuation in the line of existence, that there is in Christ no such created human existence, seems to rob Christ of any existence at all, or to place a phantasmal Christ with a human nature lacking in a human existence.¹¹⁰

This difficulty was well known to the classical commentators of the Thomist school, and is treated by Cajetan¹¹¹ and by John of Saint Thomas.¹¹² They reply by defending the possibility of supplying the positive perfections of created personality and created existence by the divine transcendent perfection, which eminently and formally contains whatever perfection these created things imply. We feel that the possibility of supplying human personality by that of the Divine Person of the Son of God, can, in the case of Christ, hardly be denied while the faith defined at Chalcedon remains intact.¹¹³ It would even seem to be implicitly taught by the Gospels themselves. The

¹¹⁰ Cf. Diepen, *art. cit.*, (1953), p. 46.

¹¹¹ Cf. Cajetan, commenting on *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 17, a. 2: “. . . quoniam ex assumptione ad divinum esse perfecta est potentialitas ad existentiam longe excellentius quam fuisset per propriam existentiam; sicut posse personari in propria persona longe excellentius perfectum est per personam Verbi quam fuisset perfectum per propriam personalitatem.”

¹¹² Cf. John of St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*

¹¹³ Of the Chalcedon definition Pope Pius XII wrote in the encyclical *Sempiternus Rex Christus*: “. . . Chalcedonensi definitione, vocibus personae et hypostasis eadem notio subicitur; nomini autem naturae alia vis inest, neque unquam eius significatio pro illis nominibus sumitur.” (*AAS* 43 (1951) pp. 635-636). In accordance with this definition of Chalcedon, we must hold that the sacred humanity is not a human, but a Divine Person, that of the Word made flesh; and we must also hold that the Divine Person of the Word can take the place of a connatural human person by the miracle of the Incarnation. This supplying by the divine Person, seems necessarily to demand a supplying of personality.

possibility of supplying created human existence by the divine existence is at present a matter of dispute;¹¹⁴ we shall not enter here into the controversy, being content to speak of the divine actuation in the line of personality itself, which must remain unassailed by the present objection.¹¹⁵

A third difficulty brought against the Thomist theory of pure formal actuation is drawn from the Thomist teaching on the analogy of being. If the divine act can actuate the humanity of Christ, and actuate it in its proper constitution as a real being (that is, in the line of personality), the divine act seems to belong equally to two different natures, in a proper way, and so the way appears to be open to univocity of being, or at least to univocity between the divine nature and the human nature of Christ.¹¹⁶ Once again, we think that when the concept of pure formal actuation is grasped, there is little force in the objection: the divine act comes to the assumed humanity in such a way that it leaves it wholly and perfectly constituted as a nature.¹¹⁷

A fourth difficulty often alleged against the theory of pure formal actuation comes from the difficulty of assigning its proper formal effect. For this effect must be either created or uncreated. If it be created, it would not come formally from God but efficiently, and this would destroy the whole idea of actuation. If it be uncreated, it cannot be received by a created quiddity, even by a composition *secundum numerum*, because what is uncreated can be caused in no genus of cause.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ In entering the question of the divine actuation as such in the real order, we have none the less touched very closely the question of the act of existence in Christ. Since, as will be seen, we shall uphold the divine actuation in the line of subsistence, and see no difficulty in defending its applicability to the real order, the whole question for us in this: in the absolute power of God, can a created essence exist without existing by its connatural created act of existence?

¹¹⁵ This will be sufficient for the purposes of the essay; we shall be content to show that the Word truly has a unique causal influence over His sacred humanity, and we can do this without entering directly the controverted question of Christ's existence.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Diepen, *art. cit.* (1953), pp. 45 sqq.; Hastings, *art. cit.*, pp. 156-157.

¹¹⁷ Cf. John of St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁸ We have proposed the argument as given in John of St. Thomas. We think

Cajetan and John of Saint Thomas, in reply, both insist that the formal effect is strictly and properly uncreated, although by participation it is created and in time.¹¹⁹ For them pure formal actuation consists most formally in the *identification* of the thing perfected with the thing which perfects, according to the order in which the actuation and communication take place; an identification, indeed, which means the *transformation* of the thing perfected into the thing which perfects in the precise order of the actuation. In this way, in the beatific vision, the glorified mind becomes intelligibly and intentionally God Himself; and in the hypostatic union the humanity of Christ becomes personally the Divine Word. Both, truly, are transcendent mysteries; yet they do not seem to involve contradictions. They even have a feeble parallel in the natural order, where the soul, through the intellect, is and becomes *quodammodo omnia*.¹²⁰ We shall return to this difficulty in discussing the mind and texts of Saint Thomas.

It is this difficulty that Père de la Taille has raised in his articles on created actuation by Uncreated Act; Cf. our note 24. Although we here propose the teaching of Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, and not that of de la Taille, none the less we acknowledge that in defending the idea of an actuation in the Incarnation, we are at one with what we believe was de la Taille's basic insight into the mystery. We disagree in explaining how this was brought about, we do not reject the basic truth which both explanations try to penetrate and explain. For an analysis of the position of de la Taille in the light of Thomist teaching, see T. U. Mullaney, O.P., *The Thomist* XVII (1954) pp. 42 sqq.

We have thought that this difficulty was prominent in the mind of Diepen from the outset of his critique on Cajetan's position. In suggesting, from the first, (cf. 1950, p. 116) that in speaking of a "sustaining" of the sacred humanity by the divine *esse*, the thomists were in reality departing from formal causality and speaking of efficient, he seems to have assumed the impossibility of an uncreated formal effect: which, for us, is not proved.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Cajetan, *loc. cit.*, q. 2, a. 7 (concerning the uncreated personal identity); John of S. Thomas, *loc. cit.*: "Et sic effectus formalis qui resultat, est increatus formaliter: sed participative communicatio eius creata est, et in tempore; sicut enim ex unione Personae divinae, resultavit hunc hominem esse subsistentem in persona increata, sibi tamen creato modo communicata: ita ex unione divinae essentiae ad intellectum, resultat esse intelligibiliter deificatum intellectum, modo tamen creato et finito; immo est ipsemet Deus intelligibiliter talis intellectus, eo modo quo cognoscens dicitur ipsum cognitum intelligibiliter, et quasi transformative."

¹²⁰ Cf. *De Verit.*, q. 2, a. 2.

A last speculative difficulty raised against the actuation theory would concede the explanations given, including that of the uncreated formal effect, in the intentional order, but refuse to admit its validity in the real order.¹²¹ It concedes the validity of the theory to explain the union of the glorified mind with the divine essence; here the whole mystery is summed up in saying that the blessed intellect intelligibly is God; there is nothing more to be said. But in the real physical ontological order of the Incarnation, actuation does not seem to cover the whole case: the whole mystery does not consist in the fact that the flesh of Christ becomes personally the very Son of God, but it implies—even chiefly implies—that the Son of God appropriates to Himself the humanity thus hypostatically united to Him, that He is made the subject of attribution of everything which belongs to that nature, that He is constituted the true *quod* and agent of that nature, without thereby suffering any detriment. The theory of actuation would then be inadequate to explain the fullness of the mystery; and it could even be alleged that it would be invalidly applied to explain any aspect of it, in so far as the added concept of the perficient appropriating to itself and acting through the thing perfected, seems incompatible with what essentially and totally consists in a transformative identity of the perfected with the perficient.¹²²

How then could we express the core of the mystery of the union? Relinquishing the theory of pure formal actuation, we could speak of an appropriation or integration of the sacred humanity by the Person of the Word. The entering of the humanity into personal union with the Word would imply, not

¹²¹ Cf. Diepen, *art. cit.*, (1953), where much more is made of this point than previously.

¹²² In an attempt to extend the thought of Diepen to the entire order of real actuation, and not merely leave it in the order of existence, we have ourselves formulated this critique. We think there is some basis for saying that it has been inspired by what he has written, although we do not propose it directly as his express view. Cf. what he writes in his 1953 article on pp. 52-56, and 49-51, treating of the impossibility of actuation in the line of subsistence, and of the way of conceiving the mystery of the personalisation of Christ.

a perfectivity of the humanity by the Word, but a coaptation of the humanity to the Word, which would elevate it to the personal dignity of the Word without direct actuation, and further imply the capacity of the Word to act through the humanity. It thus possesses, and to perform through it a human activity which would be truly the human activity of the Word. Where the union is bilateral, and implies not only an elevation of the inferior, but a possessive acquisition by the superior, the concept of actuation is said to fail; and another concept, that of a real possessive relationship, is substituted for it.

We shall reserve our comments until we come to a direct discussion of Saint Thomas.

To complete the picture of the theory of actuation and all it implies, we must mention several historical difficulties raised against it in as far as it might be ascribed to Saint Thomas.

First, the disputed question *De Unione Verbi Incarnati*, to-day accepted by historians as authentic and written in the last years of Saint Thomas' life, contains passages which seem to indicate a twofold existence in Christ, one divine and another human, and so seems to preclude any idea of a divine actuation in the line of existence.¹²³ Some have thence argued that the entire concept of pure formal actuation is foreign to the mind of the Angelic Doctor, at least in its application to the mystery of the Incarnation. In view of the uncertainty of the texts, date of composition, and interpretation, we shall make no comment on the actuation in the line of existence; but shall confine our treatment to that in the line of personality itself.

¹²³ The work of F. Pelster, S. J., published in *Archives de Philosophie* III (1925) pp. 198-245. *La Questio Disputata de Saint Thomas De Unione Verbi Incarnati*, is fundamental in this accepted modern view. Other bibliographical indications can be found in Diepen's article, *Revue Thomiste* 1950, p. 297, note 1, where the views of Cajetan, Billot, Mandonnet, Synave, Roland-Gosselin, d'Alès, and Garrigou-Lagrange are cited. It would be interesting to know whether this work comes before or after the *Tertia Pars*. It seems almost impossible to know. Father Hastings in his article cites Mandonnet and Grabmann, and Chenu with some probability, for the view that it is before the *Tertia Pars*; and Pelster, Synave, and Glorieux for the view that it is later. The question of the interpretation of this work is even more important, and in a sense even more difficult. Cf. M. Corvez, O. P., in *Revue Thomiste* 1956, pp. 413-426.

A similar difficulty comes from the position of the *Compendium Theologiae* in the historical development of the teaching of St. Thomas on the Incarnation. Historians nowadays are inclined to date it before the *Prima Pars* of the Summa; and so it cannot be used as some have attempted to use it, as a reply to the apparent position of the *De Unione*.¹²⁴ We can side-step this point, as we concern ourselves only with actuation in the line of personality.

Again, some of the early Thomists have held a twofold existence in Christ;¹²⁵ and this too is a difficulty if we uphold an actuation precisely in the line of existence. Again, it has no direct bearing on our approach.

A final historical difficulty, which argues against our intention, is this: Saint Thomas, who apparently knew of pure formal actuation and used it in treating of the beatific vision, seems never to have expressly applied it to the Incarnation. Was it because he considered it inapplicable to that mystery? On the other hand, whenever he describes this mystery, he seems to depart deliberately from terms redolent of causality, and to prefer the formula *unio secundum hypostasim* with the concepts of appropriation and possession of the sacred humanity by the Word as its Personal Subject. What is the reason for this preference?

In the light of the beauty of the Thomist view sustaining pure formal actuation in the mystery of the Incarnation, and in the light of the difficulty coming from some of the arguments brought against it, we shall now turn to Saint Thomas himself, and see what pure formal actuation signifies in his mind, and how he stands concerning its application to the Incarnation.

¹²⁴ Cf. Hastings, article quoted. After this article there has recently appeared an erudite study on the matter by R. Guindon, O. M. I., in *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa*, 26 (1956), pp. 193-214—whose conclusion we have resumed. He cites Backes, Mandonnet, Synave, Grabmann, Lottin, Walz, Motte, Dondaine and Chenu.

¹²⁵ Pelster in his article has collected the evidence among the early thomists, stressing Hervaeus Natalis. Reference is made to this by Diepen, 1950, p. 295 (without much emphasis), and by Hastings.

We may state at the outset that we think that the view of the classic commentators of the Thomist school is a faithful and penetrating interpretation of the thought of their Master; and that we believe we can find in it a solution to the problem of the exclusive causal influence of the Person of the Word over the human activity of Christ.

The idea of pure formal actuation in Saint Thomas.

Saint Thomas has expressly taught the idea of pure formal actuation in treating of the union of the divine essence with the intellect of the blessed. In the beatific vision he teaches the absence of every created intelligible species, which is repugnant to that vision because it is absolutely useless to express and represent the infinite and uncreated perfection of God. None the less, he is aware that this vision demands some union of the intellect with the divine essence itself in the intentional and intelligible order, just as in natural understanding there can be no act of intellection unless the object to be understood is first united to the knowing subject. It is necessary therefore for Saint Thomas to describe and explain this union which he demanded between the mind of the blessed and the essence of God, and from which he excluded every created mean. The difficulty was to find a kind of union which while remaining a true union, would exclude every trace of imperfection and would be sufficient to determine the created intellect to see the very essence of God.

St. Thomas treats the point several times,¹²⁶ but does not appear to reach his definite formulation before the third book of the *Summa Contra Gentes*. In the fourth book of *Sentences*, where his real originality is to seek for a solution in the terms of the philosophers,¹²⁷ he looks to the two parts of his problem separately. First he asks can such a union of the divine essence with the mind be explained at all. To this he says that the

¹²⁶ The chief places are IV *Sent.*, d. 49, q. 2, aa. 1, 6; *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 1; III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 51; *Summa Theol.* I, q. 12, a. 2. To these texts could be added others before the IV *Sent.*, namely III *Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 1; *Quodlibet* 7, q. 1, a. 1.

¹²⁷ Cf. Père Gillon, *art. cit.* coll. 659-660.

divine essence is related to the intellect "as a form" (*ut forma*) not because it forms an *unum simpliciter* with it, but because its proportion to the intellect is as the proportion of form to matter. In support of this he quotes a principle of Averroes, stating that whenever two things, of which one is more perfect than the other, are received into the same subject, the proportion of the more perfect to the less perfect is as the proportion of form to matter. This is a reference to the mode of union of the intellect with separate substance, proposed by the Arab philosophers, namely a mode of simple copulation or conjunction.¹²⁸ It might be doubted whether the force of St. Thomas' thought lies in the Averroistic principle, or rather in the direct proportion of one thing to the other as its greater perfection, without any reference to reception; at all events this is hardly a definitive solution to the problem. In answer to the second part of his problem, Saint Thomas shows that such a union is sufficient to determine the blessed mind to understand the divine essence, by saying that the object united to the mind, namely God himself, is absolutely above all matter and may be called a pure form, a *forma tantum*, capable thereby of determining the intellect.

These two distinct questions of the Commentary on the *Sentences* are reduced to one in the *De Veritate*.¹²⁹ A single reply is sufficient to show the nature of the union, and its sufficiency to determine the mind to see God. The divine essence is related to the intellect as a form (*ut forma*); and the reason seems to lie in the proportion of one element to the other, which is said to be like the proportion of form to matter.¹³⁰ And the basic

¹²⁸ Cf. Gillon, *Ibid.* Capreolus, in III *Sent.*, d. 5, q. 2, a. 1, *tertia conclusio*, ed. Paban-Pegues, p. 65, quotes this principle and seems to hinge his case on it: "Quandocumque duo principia unius operationis, vel concurrentia sicut unum perfectum principium unius operationis, habentia se ut formalius et actualius, et minus actuale et formale, recipiuntur in eodem susceptivo, unum eorum se habet ad aliud quasi forma ad materiam, vel actus ad potentiam." The later commentators have not used the principle.

¹²⁹ *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 1.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, "Non autem oportet quod ipsa divina essentia fiat forma intellectus ipsius, sed quod se habeat ad ipsum ut forma; ut sicut ex forma, quae est pars

reason which establishes this proportion is that the divine essence is itself a pure form, a *forma tantum*. Again there are indications that St. Thomas has not yet reached a final answer to the difficulty; there seems a conscious attempt in the reply to the sixth argument to determine more accurately what the proportion is that establishes the likeness to that between matter and form.¹⁸¹

The approach to the question just seen in the *De Veritate* is preserved in the *Contra Gentes*. The two parts of the problem are treated as one; Ferrariensis resumes them thus: "But against this conclusion St. Thomas places a doubt. For that by which the intellect understands something, is the form of the intellect reducing it into act. But the divine essence is *per se* subsisting and cannot be the form of anything, as was had in the first book . . ." ¹⁸²

Saint Thomas begins his reply with the distinction we have

rei, et materia efficitur unum ens actu, ita, licet dissimili modo, ex essentia divina et intellectu creato fiat unum in intelligendo, dum intellectus intelligit, et essentia divina per seipsam intelligitur. Qualiter autem essentia separata possit conjungi intellectui ut forma, sic ostendit Commentator in III de Anima. Quandocumque in aliquo receptibili duo quorum unum est altero perfectius, proportio perfectioris ad minus perfectum est sicut proportio formae ad suum perfectibile; sicut lux est perfectio coloris, quando ambo recipiuntur in diaphano. Et ideo, cum intellectus creatus, qui inest substantiae creatae, sit imperfectior divina essentia in eo existente, comparabitur divina essentia ad illum intellectum quoddammodo ut forma . . . quodammodo essentia divina, quae est actus purus, quamvis habeat esse distinctum omnino ab intellectu, efficitur tamen ei ut forma in intelligendo. Ideo dicit Magister in II, dist. ii, Sententiarum, quod unio corporis ad animam rationalem est quoddam exemplum beatae unionis spiritus rationalis ad Deum."

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* ad 6um: ". . . proportio, proprie loquendo, nihil est aliud quam habitudo quantitatis ad quantitatem, sicut quod aequalis sit una alteri vel tripla; et exinde translatus est nomen proportionis, ut habitudo cuiuslibet ad rem alteram proportio nominetur; sicut dicitur materia esse proportionata formae in quantum se habet ad formam ut materia *eius* (*italics ours*) non considerata aliqua habitudine quantitatis. . . ." This hint is perhaps reflected in the ad 15 of the same article: ". . . intellectus creatus nunquam pertingit ad essentiam divinam, ut sit eiusdem naturae cum ea; *pertingit tamen ad ipsam ut ad formam intelligibilem.*" (*italics ours*).

¹⁸² Cf. Ferrariensis in III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 51.: "Sed contra hanc conclusionem movet Sanctus Thomas dubium. Id enim quo intellectus aliquid intelligit, est forma intellectus per quam fit in actu. Sed divina essentia est per se subsistens, et nullius potest esse forma, ut in primo libro habitum est . . ."

already seen to be basic in his mind on the problem: sc., that between a *forma* which is a pure form, a *forma tantum*, and a form which is not a *forma tantum*. But here he makes express a new condition he had not previously put forward explicitly: for something to be as a form (*ut forma*) to something else, not only must it be a *forma tantum*, but: "However, that which is so subsisting that it is yet from above, can be the form of something else provided that its being be such that it can be participated by something else."¹³³

He demands a sharing, a participation in the one common *esse* by force of the very union effected between the two. With his conditions then placed, he goes on to show in the vision of the divine essence the verification of all the conditions needed for such a thing to happen.

We believe that what the Angelic Doctor here describes is nothing else than the pure formal actuation realised by Cajetan, John of St. Thomas and the Thomist commentators who follow them. But there is more in the conditions laid down here by the Master than we might think. Are we to say that the proper function of the pure form, the *forma tantum*, in this actuation is to communicate to another its own *esse*? We do not think so. From the parallel references in this chapter of the *Contra Gentiles*,¹³⁴ and from the analogy of Saint Thomas' explanation of the function of the intelligible species in knowledge, we think rather that what the actuating form most properly gives, is *a share in its own proper formal perfection*; which formal perfection, as shared, is the proper reason why the thing perfected can share with the thing which perfects its own peculiar and proportionate *esse*. And if we ask further, what is it for the actuating thing to be for the thing actuated the formal *ratio* of its share in the same *esse*, without there being a *tertium quid* formed between the two natures, then we think we must appeal

¹³³ III *Cont. Gent.*, c. 51: "Illud tamen quod sic est subsistens ut tamen solum sit forma, potest alterius esse forma, dummodo esse suum sit tale quod ab aliquo alio participari possit."

¹³⁴ Especially the reference to II *Cont. Gent.*, c. 68—the teaching of the union of soul and body.

to what may be called a *transformative identity* of the thing actuated with the actuating perfection in the order of the *esse* communicated.¹³⁵ Thus in the mystery of the union of the glorified mind with God, the mind becomes through the union intentionally and intelligibly God Himself; God Himself in the perfection of His own form is the formal reason for the mind's sharing with Him in the one divine intelligible *esse*. To sum up, then, the deep thought of Saint Thomas here seems to propose four elements which go to make up the actuation; namely

- 1) that there be some *esse* in which the actuating form and the thing perfected can share;
- 2) that the actuating form be in itself a pure form, a *formantum* at least in the order of the *esse* to be communicated;
- 3) that the actuating form be to the thing actuated its formal reason for its share in the *esse* communicated to it;
- 4) that the thing perfected become the actuating form by a transformative identity in the order of the *esse* communicated.

And these four elements are connected; the first seems to be a *conditio sine qua non* for the actuation; the second the root and source and ultimate explanation of its possibility; the third and fourth express its formal essence, the third in a more

¹³⁵ We have taken the adjective "*transformative*" from three sources. First, from the general concept of formal causality which all authors holding the actuation have preserved; secondly, from a phrase of St. Thomas, in *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 5, ad 3: ". . . dispositio ad formam ignis non potest esse naturalis, nisi habenti formam ignis. Unde lumen gloriæ non potest esse naturale creaturæ, nisi creatura esset naturæ divinæ, quod est impossibile. Per hoc enim lumen fit creatura rationalis *deiformis* . . ." To become *deiform*, is in some sense *transformative*; and to become *deiform* is what the actuation achieves, in a far higher way than by the objective participation of the *lumen gloriæ*. Finally, there is the expression of John of St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*: speaking of the intellect under the divine actuation, he says "immo est ipsemet Deus intelligibiliter, talis intellectus, eo modo quo cognoscens dicitur ipsum cognitum intelligibiliter, *et quasi transformative*." We shall later make one reserve on this when applying the notion to the Incarnation.

general way, the fourth more definitely. Thus the thought of our Doctor is that pure formal actuation consists radically and fundamentally in the pure perfection of the form which in the order in which it is communicated is nothing but form; while essentially it consists in the transformative identity by which the thing perfected becomes the perfecting form in the order in which it is communicated, so that the formality of the perfecting form is the reason for the community in *esse*. We may say then, that, since such a form cannot be conceived except it be the divine Pure Act, pure formal actuation is a quasi-property or proper *passio* of this Pure Act as such. This represents the perfection—or perhaps the perfect explication—of St. Thomas' previous writing on this point, and no longer betrays any dependence on the Arabian concept of simple copulation with separate substance.¹³⁶

Finally in Question 12 of the *Prima Pars* St. Thomas returns to this teaching, without great modification. It is interesting to note that here he wishes to put forward his teaching under the patronage of Pseudo Dionysius, and refers definitely to the Dionysian doctrine of the essential transcendence of the divine order. In reply to the third difficulty, he writes: "... the divine essence is existence itself. Hence as other intelligible forms which are not their own existence are united to the intellect by means of some existence by which they inform the intellect and make it in act, so the divine essence is united to the created intellect as the object actually understood, making the intellect in act through Itself."¹³⁷

This is a simple statement of the position which was gradually worked out in the previous works. We have but two comments. St. Thomas seems to look more and more on this kind

¹³⁶ The Averroistic formula is no longer cited, and the whole case rests on the entirely Thomist concept of God as Pure Act, and on the concept of real communication.

¹³⁷ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 2, ad 3.: "... divina essentia est ipsum esse. Unde sicut aliae formae intelligibiles quae non sunt suum esse, uniuntur intellectui secundum aliquod esse, quo informant ipsum intellectum et faciunt ipsum in actu, ita divina essentia unitur intellectui creato ut intellectum in actu, per seipsum faciens intellectum in actu."

of actuation as something proper to the divine, to the order where essence and *esse* are one; and, by that very fact, he makes less insistence on the part played by *esse* in the actuation itself. What he would really demand, we believe, as the condition of the actuation is a real communicability of the form in the order of the actuation; the share in *esse*, precisely because it is in the divine order, will be a share in an *esse* identified divinely with the divine actuating form, not a share in an *esse* distinct from the form which actuates.¹³⁸

We have then the essentials of St. Thomas' notion of pure formal actuation.¹³⁹ We can express them in the following schema:

Pure formal actuation:

its *conditio sine qua non*: real communicability of the perfect in the line of some positive perfection.

its *root and principle of explanation*: the fullness of perfection of the divine Pure Act.

¹³⁸ It is here, perhaps, that the full force of the Thomist synthesis is seen. Not only does the case rest on the idea of God as the *Actus Purus*, but also on the concept of Him as *Ipsium Esse Subsistens*: so that His subsistent *esse* is the reason for His divine ability to perfect, and is the reason why He is communicable precisely and strictly as a formal actuation: He *is* the *esse* which can be given to another.

¹³⁹ We believe that St. Thomas has thus come to a concept of pure formal actuation which is objectively valid in general, and contains no mere limitation to the order of the beatific vision. It is interesting to note that a contemporary writer, the Franciscan John Peckham, seemed to interpret his thought in this way, even if he did not agree with it: he writes: "dicunt aliqui, quod ad visionem Dei non plus requiritur quam dispositio mentis per lumen gloriae, quo facto, videt Deum Qui per se ipsum informat intellectum sicut praesens non inhaerens. Contra: oculus corporalis bene dispositus non videt colorem etiam praesentem, nisi informet pupillam similitudine sua. Amplius, dicat quod lux increata est forma intellectus gloriosi informando eum quodammodo active. Quaero: utrum ex ista informatione activa relinquatur aliqua formatio passio? Si non, nihil fit in intellectu et non videt. Si sic, non est passio sine aliquo immisso ipsi passo et ita habeo propositum: hoc enim dico similitudinem supradictam." (Cf. *Antonianum*, 81 (1933), p. 452). It is interesting to see so early, not merely the general sense of formal actuation so clearly seen, but also the difficulty we believe basic to the whole concept. Cf. our note 118. Cajetan could have replied to Peckham that there was something *immissum* into the intellect: the uncreated formal effect of the actuation.

its *essence*, expressed

in a more general way: that the perficient to be formal ratio of the sharing in the positive perfection communicated to the thing perfected;

in a more definite way: that there be a transformative identity of the thing perfected into the thing that perfects, in the line of the positive perfection communicated.¹⁴⁰

In first speaking of pure formal actuation, we called it a certain analogous mode of formal cause. It is clear now that it both resembles and differs from the commonly known formal cause; and it is important to clarify the analogy.

First of all, the condition of actuation, namely the communicability of the perficient according to some positive perfection, hints at a manner of existing on the part of the perficient itself by which it is not closed in itself, but open as it were to communication to another. Thus it becomes in the actuation a true principle of the communication of its perfection to what it perfects. In this way it bears a certain and clear likeness to commonly known formal cause, which demands as a condition on the part of the perficient such an open manner of existing.

Secondly, both the purely actuating form and the commonly

¹⁴⁰ We may perhaps add to this description two further points, which may be put down as *conveniences* of the notion. First, as actuation is a quasi-property of the supreme good, which is diffusive of itself in a supreme way, we may think that the actuation is greater and more befitting the actuating form when what is actuated is the more humble. In this way, is it not *in some ways* a greater actuation when given to human nature, than if it were given to angelic nature hypostatically assumed? Secondly, we should not forget that the idea of "divine form" for St. Thomas "competit nominibus propriis Filii tripliciter. Filius enim est qui generatur, et finis generationis est forma. Et ideo ut ostendatur perfectus Dei Filius, dicit 'in forma' quasi habens perfecte formam Patris. Similiter verbum non est perfectum, nisi quando ducit in cognitionem naturae rei; et sic verbum Dei in forma Dei dicitur, quia habet naturam Patris. Similiter nec imago dicitur perfecta, nisi habeat formam cuius est imago." (In *Ad. Phil.*, c. 2, lec. 2). Appropriatively, there is something special in having a formal actuation—and an Incarnation—of the Word. Cf. Cajetan's beautiful remark on III, q. 3, a. 8 (n. I): ". . . supra participationem divini Verbi, in qua propria perfectio hominis secundum mentem consistit, convenientissime apponitur ut ipsum Verbum Dei personaliter uniatur naturae humanae, ut consummata sit hominis perfectio; ut scilicet quae inchoatur in participatione ipsius Verbi humana perfectio, *consummetur* non in participatione, sed in personali ademptione ipsius Verbi." (Italics ours.)

known form derive all their power to perfect from the fullness of perfection already inherent in them.

Thirdly, we must investigate the likeness between the two in the very essence of the formal causality displayed in each. For there is a difficulty, and a grave one: in pure formal actuation, the essence of the causality consists in the transformative identity of the thing perfected with the perfecting form; but in commonly known formal causality, although the form is the formal *ratio* of the sharing of the perfection given, there is no transformative identity established between the form and its matter. The difference is clearly in the different union between the perfecting form and the thing perfected; the commonly known form is received by a receptive union into matter, and the divine actuating form is united by a non-receptive identity to the thing it perfects. But therein lies the real problem: if the union in each case is diverse, do the causality and the perfecting really remain similar? Wherein precisely lies the analogy between the received form and the actuating form precisely as formal causality? And if it be only an analogy, how can formal causality be yet considered as an ultimate specific type of causality?

We think we can solve the difficulty by saying that the function of union in commonly known formal causality is that of a condition, not an essential part of the causality as such. This appears to be the thought of John of St. Thomas, when he writes:

In form intrinsically denominating, formal causality or second act is not distinguished from first act by the addition of something intrinsic, but only by the extrinsic conditions which it connotes and requires. The reason for this is, that as the formal effect is not distinguished intrinsically and entitatively from the form itself as communicated, it does not therefore require any mediate causality as a formal reason of actuating and communicating itself, for if the effect is not distinguished from the cause, neither does it need any mean causing it. Nor is the form more in act through any other second causality than through itself, for it immediately actuates and is communicated through itself, yet regaining something extrinsic as application which changes the form that it might be communi-

cated to matter, just as union is formally made through the being of the extremes immediately, although it requires active and passive change that the extremes be conjoined.¹⁴¹

According to John of Saint Thomas, then, a form causes

. . . through actuality which *secundum se* is determined to actuating and immediately actuates by itself, *when* it is received in and conjoined to matter; nor does it need a new actuality added to it in order to render the matter actuated and the composite constituted; and so it is not necessary that the form be constituted in second act by anything intrinsically added to it, as a formal reason of causality.¹⁴²

John of St. Thomas therefore gives to union in formal causality no essentially causative function, but merely the place of a condition. The dependence of the form on matter is wholly on the part of the matter, in no way on the part of the form, or of the proper causality of the form. If then the difference between the actuating formal causality and the inhering formal causality reduces itself to a difference in the union that accompanies the presence and activity of the form, it means that the difference is one of *state*, and not a difference in the *formal ratio* of formal causality. If we consider each precisely from the point of view of their formal causality, we can say that

¹⁴¹ John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, *loc. cit.*, p. 234: "Quod in forma intrinsece denominante, causalitas formalis, seu actus secundus non distinguitur ab actu primo, superaddendo aliquid intrinsecum, sed solum penes extrinsecas conditiones quas connotat et requirit. Cuius fundamentum est, quia effectus formalis non distinguitur intrinsece entitative ab ipsamet forma ut communicata, non ergo requirit aliquam causalitatem mediam tanquam rationem formalem actuandi et communicandi se, si enim effectus non distinguitur ab ipsa causa, neque indiget medio causante ipsum. Nec per aliquam causalitatem secundam est magis in actu forma, quam per seipsam, sed per seipsam immediate actuat et communicatur, requirit tamen aliquid extrinsecum tanquam applicationem, quod immutat ipsam formam ut communicetur materiae, sicut unio formaliter fit per ipsam entitatem extremorum immediate, licet requirat immutationem activam, vel passivam, ut ipsa extrema conjungantur."

¹⁴² *Ibid.* ". . . per actualitatem quae secundum se est determinata ad actuandum, . . . et seipsa immediate actuat, *quando* recipitur et coniungitur materiae, neque indiget nova actualitate superaddita ut materiam reddat actuatam, et compositum constituat, et sic non oportet quod in actu secundo constituatur per aliquid superadditum entitative ipsi formae, tanquam per rationem formalem causalitatis."

each actuates, formalizes, and perfects exactly and wholly in the same way as the other. None the less because in the pure formal actuation there is no receptive union or reception by matter, but rather a union by identity, the *state* proper to the exercise of the causality differs in each case—and, to reflect the saying of Cajetan, differs more than heaven and earth.¹⁴³ Although the strict causality does not differ from that of any other formal cause, nonetheless because of its unique state pure formal actuation remains in the sphere of mystery; it would require a divine miracle to produce that union needed for it, and so we must leave its existence and its positive possibility where they belong—in the divine order of mystery.

Following the thought of John of St. Thomas, which we believe to be faithful to that of the Angelic Doctor, we think that pure actuation and inhering formal causality are, in essence, univocally the same. We add, however, that the form which actuates in the case of the pure actuation, namely the divine form, is analogous to other forms both with analogy of attribution and analogy of proper proportionality. We believe, too, that the description of pure formal actuation as an eminent and analogous mode of formal cause can be retained; because when we consider the state and the conditions of exercise of this and other formal causes, we see a clear and definite analogy. This position determines still more our notion of this actuation; and it shows it to be clearly a true and proper form of causality, and indeed a true and proper form of active causality.

It only remains to apply this notion to the mystery of the Hypostatic Union.

We shall first consider its implicit application according to the principles and great lines of St. Thomas' teaching on the Incarnation. Later we shall speak of an explicit application in his writings.

It will not now be difficult to show the verification of the full notion of pure formal actuation, as we have expounded it,

¹⁴³ Cf. *supra* note 54.

in the hypostatic union. Let us take up the *conditio sine qua non* of this actuation, that is, real communicability in the order of a positive perfection; here we are dealing with personality, which in the clear doctrine of St. Thomas is a positive perfection, and we must also confess that the divine personality of the Word is not **only** communicable but actually communicated to the assumed humanity as its own personality. Moreover, we are thus dealing with a divine perfection, with Pure Act itself, and so we have the root and source of pure actuation. Further, the Divine Word is, according to the principles of St. Thomas, the formal reason for the sharing of the sacred humanity in the positive perfection of the Word's personality; and this cannot be done, again according to his principles, without an identity, which, as it were, transforms that human nature into the Word in the order of the positive perfection of personality.¹⁴⁴ Thus we find verified all the conditions and elements of pure formal actuation in the mystery of the Hypostatic Union as conceived by St. Thomas.¹⁴⁵

There remains one serious difficulty against this application. It has been argued that such an actuation is invalidly applied to the case, because the appropriation and integration of the sacred humanity by and into the Divine Word is foreign to the notion of pure formal actuation, which by definition is nothing more than actuation. In reply, let us note first that when St. Thomas discussed the idea of actuation in the context of the beatific vision, he in no way restricted its possible extension beyond the intentional order, but placed general conditions which in themselves had no necessary restriction to that order.¹⁴⁶ Still, it is necessary to show as far as possible that the added notion of appropriation and integration does not destroy

¹⁴⁴ There is a difficulty in using the word "*transformative*" in the case of the hypostatic union. It normally implies priority of the thing transformed. And the sacred humanity does not exist prior to the coming and the actuation of the Word. But we think we can preserve the phrase, on the ground that the sacred humanity, as a nature, remains the same as it would have been prior to the actuation.

¹⁴⁵ We may note that the two conveniences of pure formal actuation noted in Note 140 are verified also here: it is the Word who actuates a human nature.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *supra* p. 218.

the valid use of the notion of actuation; we think we can do this, and even suggest that without the idea of actuation, that of appropriation can hardly be applied to the Incarnation with full force. We freely concede that there is in the mystery of the Hypostatic Union the aspect of appropriation of the sacred humanity by the Word as Its own. This appropriation can be nothing else but the real relation of possession by which the human nature of Christ pertains to the Word. It indicates strictly the relation of union of the human nature thus elevated. Actuation on the other hand is merely one expression of the ontological *unity* and identity on which this relation of *union* is founded; it looks to the human nature, not as united and related to the Word precisely, but as one and identified with the Word in personal unity, although secondarily it connotes the relation of union. It seems then that it is difficult to sustain the appropriation without appealing to the identity which for us is the very essence and formal *ratio* of the actuation. Truly, it seems that to insist on the concept of appropriation alone, one would be forced either to deny the analogical extensive sense of formal cause which opens the way to the idea of actuation, or to posit a relation of union without its requisite unity and identity on which it is founded. The first point seems against the mind of St. Thomas as we understand it; while the second is not merely against his explicit texts,¹⁴⁷ but really seems to be a step into the way of Scotism; and, while maintaining in general that personality is a positive perfection, would not seem to appreciate that teaching sufficiently in applying it to the Incarnation.

We think then that the opinion of the great authors of the Thomist school is a faithful interpretation of the thought of St. Thomas and is fully vindicated by the general principles of his teaching on the hypostatic union.

St. Thomas, none the less, has not said in so many words that there is pure formal actuation in the mystery of the Incarnation. Many times he seems to come close to this notion;

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *supra* pp. 176s.

he speaks of the nobility, the amelioration, and the perfection which come to the sacred humanity from the union;¹⁴⁸ he speaks of a function of principality and of perfectivity which belong to the Word in the union. Many times too he deliberately excludes the idea of a received formal causality from the union, without making any mention of another mode of this causality. His discussion of the analogy between the union of soul and body and the hypostatic union is most interesting;¹⁴⁹ many would see in it no evidence for consideration on his part of an actuation by the Word, while others, with whom we are much at one, incline rather to see such an actuation implicitly but still *equivalently expressed* in what he says in these passages.¹⁵⁰ We shall not enter here into a minute exegesis of these texts, important though it be to a full understanding of St. Thomas' mind on the Incarnation. The fact that St. Thomas has perhaps been silent about an actuation in this mystery, or the fact that he has not accentuated it in so many words, does not alter the fact, which we believe we have established, that it is in conformity with and indeed an illuminating interpretation of his certainly admitted principles. Moreover, many reasons could be alleged for such a silence or lack of accentuation; we can mention the context of his writing in the framework of the three opinions mentioned by Lombard,¹⁵¹ his approach to the problem of personality, simpler and more direct than that of Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, and his endeavours to form a truly theological synthesis of Christology, using as his principle the integral concept of the Incarnate

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2., a. 6, ad 1.; a. 10.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. especially *De Rationibus Fidei*, c. 6; IV *Cont. Gent.*, c. 41; *De Unione Verbi*, a. 4. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2., a. 1, ad 2; a. 6, ad 2.

¹⁵⁰ The triple comparison of soul: body, Word: sacred humanity, and divine essence: glorious intellect, would bear an interesting study in St. Thomas. We feel perhaps that the idea of actuation underlies St. Thomas's thought here, and that it is at the root of his concept of the *instrumentum coniunctum et proprium Verbi*. But that is matter for extended study.

¹⁵¹ This could perhaps have been a reason for caution in speaking of actuation. Easily misunderstood, it could have been taken as equivalently monophysist, and put down as the reason for opposition to the two opinions branded as leading to Nestorianism.

Word as Redeemer.¹⁵² One consideration we may add: no special and proper order of union, in the last analysis, belongs to pure formal actuation as such. It involves identity in the line of a positive perfection; but that identity may be in the intentional as well as in the ontological order. Thus a description of the hypostatic union as a union by pure formal actuation would not ultimately determine and distinguish this union; to do that St. Thomas needs to classify it as a *unio secundum hypostasim*; which, we believe, is what he intends to do; and which is what he does.¹⁵³

St. Thomas then by virtue of his principles on the Hypostatic Union must favour the theory of a pure formal actuation of the sacred humanity in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Is this actuation exclusive to the Person of the Word? We cannot doubt that it is exercised by the fullness of the divine perfection, in the way that is communicated to the sacred humanity by hypostatic union. And the fullness of the divine perfection is communicated to the sacred humanity in this union, only in so far as it goes to make up the divine relative subsistence of the Word. Thus the pure actuation of which we have spoken in this mystery is in the strict sense exclusive to the Person of the Divine Word, which alone is incarnate.¹⁵⁴ We can therefore maintain in the hypostatic union a physical active causal influence which is strictly divine, and which is exclusive to the Person of the Word.

¹⁵² It is in the union of the idea of *Verbum Incarnatum* with that of *Redemptor* that St. Thomas has found the principle of his Christological synthesis. This does not directly involve the idea of actuation. But it could well be that that notion lies closer to the basis of Thomist Christology than we might think.

¹⁵³ Cf. IV *Cont. Gent.*, c. 41; *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 1, ad 2.

¹⁵⁴ The various shades of opinion among Thomists concerning the formal constitutive of the relative personality of the Word, do not alter the conclusion reached here on their common principles. But there will be a difference in explaining the actuation as it pertains to the Word alone; those who put the formal constitutive in the absolute subsistence as possessed by the relation, say that the Word perfects and actuates through something common to the Three Persons, not as common, but as formally proper to the Word; while those who put the formal constitutive in the divine relativity as such think that the Word thus actuates by His own relative divine subsistence, and only indirectly and materially and secondarily by the divine essence which is one with Him.

If we ask why there can be such a formal influence, while on the other hand we believe that an efficient influence of this kind would be repugnant, we must say that we have explained the formal actuation entirely within the *order of being*, wherein lies the formal constitutive of personality. Thus we were able to find a sense in which the undivided fullness of the divine pure act pertained in an exclusive way to each distinct Person of the Most Holy Trinity. The divine efficiency, however, could not be so reduced to the order of being, and considered as part of the formal make-up of personality, because it is necessarily of the *order of operation*. Thus there is not in it any formal aspect by which it can be attributed exclusively to a distinct divine Person.

And yet a difficulty remains: formal causality, precisely as causality, denotes the second act or the exercise of a first act or cause, and pertains thus to the order of operation; efficient causality denotes likewise a second act. It seems then that our distinction is invalid, that we must either admit that the pure actuation is common to the three Persons, or open the way to speaking of an efficiency which is also proper to the Word.

It is true that both formal and efficient causality denote a second act or exercise of a cause. But in formal causality, the second act is not distinguished from the first by anything intrinsic super-added, but only by extrinsic conditions which it connotes and requires.¹⁵⁵ Efficient causality, however, in its second act denotes an emanation or active production by the causal agent, and implies a relationship of derivation from the agent.¹⁵⁶ Thus we may speak even of the second act or proper exercise of formal causality, without departing from the *order* of "first act," without then leaving the order within which personality is formally constituted.

There can still be an insistence: although this is true in the causes of the natural order, it is hardly true when we come within the divine order. For there even the "second act" of efficient cause is identified with the infinite perfection of the

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *supra*. Note 142.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

first cause. Hence even there, by a special prerogative of the divine transcendence, it seems that the way is open for the attribution of the divine efficiency to distinct Persons in a distinct way.

It is true that the divine efficiency in its "second act" is one with the perfection of the first cause. But none the less, when we speak of efficiency, we must note the distinction not merely between second and first act as such, but also between action and the principle of action, or active potency, as such. And if in the divine order these too are identified, still *according to our way of understanding*, the divine essence can be taken under the aspect of action and under the aspect of active potency.¹⁵⁷ When we speak of the divine efficiency, we must think co-relatively of the divine active principle which is its whole explanation; mindful always that they are one in God. And when we think of the divine essence under the aspect of an active principle or potency, we think not merely of the divine principle from which (*quo*) the divine efficiency comes, but also of the divine principle which (*quod*) is co-relatively implied with it. This divine principle *quod* must be the divine essence itself with its absolute subsistence: that is the natural and direct term of reference as a *principium quod* for divine efficiency as such: and indeed it is the divine essence absolutely subsisting *as such*, again by force of the direct proportion to divine action. In no Thomist view does the absolute subsistence *as such* enter the formal constitutive of the relative personality of the distinct Persons. This seems to be why we can speak of a formal influence exclusive to one Person and not of an efficient influence: because the source of the formal influence is the relative personality of that Person as such, and the source of an efficient influence cannot be this relative personality as such. We may, and we must, maintain the one without the other.

But if we must exclude, as we have done, any divine efficiency which is proper to the Word and not shared by the other

¹⁵⁷ Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I., q. 25, a. 1, ad 3.

two Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, we believe we may appropriate *in a very special sense* to the Word the special divine efficient influence which moves the sacred humanity of Christ to act, and the immense divine charity which is its source. For we do maintain a true physical and active causality of the Word alone over the sacred humanity and over every action performed by the sacred humanity. This causality is formal, but in our human language we speak of it in terms that cannot be entirely removed from *connotations* of efficient causality. Hence there seems to be a special basis for the appropriation of the divine efficiency here to the Word: it consists in the fact that the Word is in an exclusive way an active influencing cause in every act of Christ. Hence we think it right to modify the true statement that every efficient influence over the sacred humanity is common to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; we think we should add that it connotes the exclusive formal influence of the Word, and for this reason may be attributed to the Word in a unique appropriation.

We have asked: does the Person of the Word exert on the human activity of Christ, a causal influence which is exclusive to Himself, divine, physical and active? We answer: the Person of the Word exercises such an influence in the order of formal causality, by a pure formal actuation which takes place within the hypostatic union and is explained by it; every efficient influence of the deity on the sacred humanity and the human activity of Christ comes equally from the Three Persons, but connotes especially the formal influence proper to the Word and for that reason may be attributed to the Word in a unique appropriation.

We shall not linger in showing how the dogmatic difficulties originally pointed out in the problem, are fully satisfied by this solution. It is enough to say that it in no way violates the axiom *Indivisibilia sunt opera SS. Trinitatis ad extra*, by remaining faithful to the interpretation of this axiom given by Pope Pius XII in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis: certissimum illud firma mente retineant, . . . omnia esse habenda SS. Trinitati communia, quatenus eadem Deum ut supremam effi-*

cientem causam respiciant."¹⁵⁸ It is enough to say that the danger of monophysitism is avoided by the concept of pure formal actuation, which remains entirely within the terms of hypostatic union, and is no more, and no less, than the dogmatic formula of Chalcedon, asserting that *utramque Redemptoris naturam in unam personam atque subsistentiam convenire.*"¹⁵⁹

This solution, too, seems to preserve what each of the two general tendencies concerning the problem strove to hold sacred: namely, the indivision of the Three Divine Persons in action, and the full implications of what it means for the human activity of Christ to be the human activity of the Word.

Positively, we believe that the solution we have offered has value in appreciating the unique human life of our Saviour. While it keeps in view, on the one hand, the common divine love which, in the words of St. Thomas quoted in *Haurietis Aquas*,"¹⁶⁰ "is the principle of human Redemption," it opens the way, on the other, to a contemplation of the "absolutely intimate way" in which the human love and the human activity of Christ "share in the life of the Incarnate Word."¹⁶¹

In saying that the divine efficiency moving the human activity of the Word is common to the Three Persons but retains a special extrinsic connotation to the Word and is thereby attributed to Him appropriatively, we can explain, at least a little, many intriguing passages of the Scriptures and the Fathers. We can see a little of what the Word Incarnate Himself taught us when he said: "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man takes it away from me but I lay it down of myself. And I have the power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again. This commandment I have received from my Father."¹⁶²

¹⁶² John, 10:17-18.

We can, too, in saying that there is a pure formal actuation

¹⁵⁸ AAS, 35 (1948), p. 231.

¹⁵⁹ AAS, 43 (1951), p. 638.

¹⁶⁰ AAS, 48 (1956), p. 332.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

of the sacred humanity by the Divine Word, penetrate a little into some of the most beautiful descriptions of the Redeemer. Taking up the word of Isaias, St. Thomas has written that Christ is *formosus*: “. . . first, because gleaming with the splendor of divinity; second, because configured by the conformity of union . . .”¹⁶³ and we feel we can express the basic conviction of this essay in saying that the sacred humanity is resplendent with the clarity, purity and perfection which are the glory of the Word.

KEVIN F. O'SHEA, C. SS. R.

*Redemptorist Monastery,
Ballarat, Victoria, Australia*

¹⁶³ *In Isaiam*, c. 63: “. . . primo, quia rutilans splendore divinitatis; secundo, quia configuratus conformitate unionis . . .”

DE LA TAILLE vs. THOMISTIC TRADITION A REPLY

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ONE of the most intriguing developments in speculative theology during the first half of the twentieth century was the theory of Maurice de la Taille called "Created Actuation by Uncreated Act."¹ The theory aimed at shedding light on the metaphysics of the supernatural order, with particular applications to the Incarnation, the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit in the souls of the just, and the beatific vision. It has won favorable acceptance by not a few distinguished theologians who have attempted to extend the area of its applicability.² Not all, of course, have been so enthusiastic in

¹ De la Taille's theory is expressed in three essays: "The Schoolmen," published in *The Incarnation* (1925 session of the Summer School of Catholic Studies, Cambridge, England) edited by Cuthbert Lattey, S.J. (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1926), pp. 152-189; "Actuation créée par Acte incréé," *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, XVIII (1928), pp. 253-268; and "Entretien amical d'Eudoxe et de Palamède sur la grâce d'union," *Revue Apologétique*, XLVIII (Jan.-June 1929), pp. 5-26 and 129-145. All three essays, the first as a reprint, the other two translated into English by Cyril Vollert, S.J., are united in a single brochure, *The Hypostatic Union and Created Actuation by Uncreated Act* (West Baden Springs, Indiana: West Baden College, 1952).

² The following list is by no means exhaustive: Cyril Vollert, S.J. in his translator's note, *The Hypostatic Union*, p. 28; William R. O'Connor, "A New Concept of Grace and the Supernatural," *The (American) Ecclesiastical Review*, XCVIII (Jan.-June, 1938), pp. 401-413; Malachi J. Donnelly, S. J., "The Theory of R. P. Maurice de la Taille, S.J. on the Hypostatic Union," *Theological Studies*, II (1941), pp. 510-526; *idem.*, "The Inhabitation of the Holy Spirit: A Solution according to de la Taille," *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947), pp. 445-470; Prudence de Letter, S.J., "Sanctifying Grace and Our Union with the Holy Trinity," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), pp. 33-58; François Bourassa, S.J., "Adoptive Sonship: Our Union with the Divine Persons," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), pp. 309-310 and 330; Joseph Trütsch, SS. *Trinitatis inhabitatio apud theologos recentiores* (Trent: Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1949), pp. 97-107. Father Trütsch in this dissertation also indicates the theory of Karl Rahner, S.J., "Zur scho-

welcoming the new interpretation of traditional theology.³ Recently, however, the entire foundations of the theory have been challenged by Father Thomas U. Mullaney, O.P., in his article, "The Incarnation: de la Taille vs. Thomistic Tradition."⁴ Father Mullaney concludes with this grave warning:

It can never be with pleasure that one concludes that a work built by a great man, and at the cost of tremendous labor, is seriously deficient. Therefore, one could not undertake a rigorous criticism of de la Taille's theory of "created actuation by uncreated act" merely for the sake of intellectual exercise. But that theory, weak and objectionable in its very foundations, is being embraced and hailed today as "an introduction to the purest scholastic tradition," "a fine supplementary text for the *De Verbo* course," "an outstanding exposition of the metaphysics of sanctifying grace and the beatific vision," and so forth. Sadly, it is none of these things. It is novel, opposed to tradition; it is doctrinally dangerous; it is, metaphysically, rooted in and built upon confusion.⁵

lastischen Begrifflichkeit der ungeschaffenen Gnade," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, LXIII (1939), pp. 137-156, as closely resembling de la Taille's (Cf. J. Trütsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-116).

In addition to the above theologians who discuss de la Taille's hypothesis at some length, others can be mentioned who refer to it briefly, but with approval: Emile Mersch, S.J., "Filii in Filio: Le surnaturel," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, LXV (1938), p. 817; and G. Philips, *La grâce des justes de l'Ancient Testament: Fondements scripturaires; Etude théologique*, "Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses, XXIV (1948), p. 45.

A new treatment of de la Taille in the light of the various objections that have been raised, Father Mullaney's in particular, appeared too late to be included in this present study: Prudence de Letter, S.J., "Created Actuation by the Un-created Act: Difficulties and Answers," *Theological Studies*, XVIII (1957), pp. 60-92. Father de Letter gives other references not included here.

³ Again the list is admittedly very incomplete: M. Retailleau, *La Sainte Trinité dans les âmes justes*, a doctoral thesis presented to the theology faculty of the Catholic University of Angers in 1932, pp. 92-140 (cited by J. Trütsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-106. Retailleau, with Father Mullaney, also believes that de la Taille's theory is inconsistent with Catholic teaching, but for different reasons; these reasons do not appear convincing to Trütsch); Lucien Chambat, O.S.B., *Présence et union: Les missions des Personnes de la Sainte Trinité selon saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Abbaye S. Wandrille: Editions de Fontenelle, 1943), p. 88, n. 35; Dom Herman Diepen, O.S.B., "La critique du basilisme selon Saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue Thomiste*, L (1950), pp. 299-303.

⁴ *THE THOMIST*, XVII (1954), pp. 1-42.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

In view of the warm encomia that other theologians have heaped on de la Taille's analysis of the supernatural order, this is a most sweeping condemnation. One naturally fixes on the verdict "doctrinally dangerous." This would seem to be the equivalent of the theological censure *doctrina non tuta*.⁶ If this verdict should be objectively justified, it would render de la Taille's theory untenable for all Catholic theologians. It should be important, therefore, to examine carefully the evidence on which Father Mullaney bases his verdict.

The further accusation that the theory "is, metaphysically, rooted in and built upon confusion" is also a serious charge that would be well worth investigating; it, too, if verified, would make de la Taille's analysis untenable. However, limitations of space require that it be left for subsequent treatment. As for the judgment that de la Taille's doctrine is "novel" and "opposed to tradition," it does not seem so necessary to treat it at any great length. A theological theory is not false merely because it is novel, nor is Thomistic tradition the only legitimate tradition allowed by the Church to theologians.⁷

The reasons on which Father Mullaney bases his contention that the hypothesis of a created actuation by uncreated Act is doctrinally dangerous amount to this, that it so obscures and minimizes the distinctions between the natural and super-

⁶ I would distinguish between a dogmatic and a theological censure. A dogmatic censure would be one imposed explicitly or implicitly by the *Magisterium* of the Church, or else one commonly accepted by theologians as certain. A theological censure, on the other hand, would be one imposed by a theological school or by individual theologians. It is clear that Father Mullaney does not intend a dogmatic censure, but that he does intend a theological censure is confirmed by what he says elsewhere (*art. cit.*, p. 20): "In all restraint may we not say that de la Taille's supposition is not alone un-Thomistic; it is, in addition, self-contradictory, and perilous at least to one basic point of faith." Cf. also p. 41.

⁷ When Father Mullaney says "opposed to tradition," it is not altogether clear whether he is referring to Catholic or to "orthodox" Thomistic tradition. However, in view of the fact that he nowhere cites Church or patristic documents, confining himself to Saint Thomas Aquinas and his interpreters, it seems safe to presume that he intends Thomistic tradition. Of course, de la Taille does claim to be at least in harmony with St. Thomas and his school, but a consideration of this claim and Father Mullaney's rejection of it are beyond the scope of this article.

natural orders and between creature and Creator, that faith is thereby endangered. "... de la Taille's position ... is contrary ... to the distinction, basic in all Christian thought, between Creator and creature ... it is ... perilous at least to one basic point of faith."⁸

If in the shadows of confused thinking the distinction between God and creature be obscured one cannot marvel that the distinction between diverse orders of creaturely things grows dim ... The tendency to destroy or lessen the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is older than human kind ...⁹

There are two principal reasons why Father Mullaney thinks that the supposition of a created actuation by uncreated Act implicitly denies the distinction, most basic to all Christian thought and Catholic dogma, between God and the creature, between the supernatural and natural orders. One objection is that any such created actuation "springing from the union of God as Act and creature as potency must be a hybrid of the uncreated and the created, the supernatural and the natural, the infinite and the limited. It would be necessarily a medium between God and not-God."¹⁰ The other difficulty is that a created actuation by uncreated Act makes a created nature contribute positively to a supernatural effect. Since Father Mullaney has confined his discussion of the first objection to the special case of the hypostatic union, it will be well to consider the second difficulty first, since it finds a more general application to all aspects of the theory.

A created actuation by uncreated Act implies a positive contribution by a creature to a supernatural effect. Father Mullaney develops this thesis at length in connection with sanctifying grace:

Here ... de la Taille, whatever his intention, does implicitly deny the distinction between the natural and the supernatural

⁸ *art. cit.*, p. 20.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26. Does this last statement refer to the fall of the angels?

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

orders. He teaches that habitual grace is a created actuation produced in the human soul by God's own essence. This Act—God—comes that "actuation may arise in the soul," habitual grace is a reality "informing its proper subject," an "actuation of the potency by the Act." There is involved then, on the side of the potency or the created nature, material causality in the true sense, with respect to a supernatural entity; the natural is a true cause of the supernatural, this time in the order of accidents. . . . It implies . . . a positive proportion between the essence of the soul as a thing of nature, and the life of God as supernatural; it implies that the soul by its natural "resources" or its "good offices" positively contributes to the essential constitution of a supernatural reality; for, according to de la Taille, that is what a material cause does.¹¹

From this and from parallel passages¹² it is clear that Father Mullaney considers the supposition of a creature as a true material cause of a supernatural reality to be doctrinally dangerous on the grounds that the distinction between the supernatural and the natural orders is thereby implicitly compromised. That de la Taille does hold this supposition cannot be denied. He speaks unequivocally of sanctifying grace and the light of glory as informing their created subjects, that is, the essence of the human soul and the human intellect, respectively.¹³ Correlatively, therefore, the human soul and intellect

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21. The citation is from *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 33-34.

¹² *art. cit.*, pp. 15-18 and 23-24.

¹³ *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 32 and 34. I am confining my discussion of Father Mullaney's objection to the case of sanctifying grace because the teaching of the Church is more explicit on this point. From the point of view of the objection, moreover, the light of glory is basically similar, so that what is said of grace may be transferred, *mutatis mutandis*. The grace of union, however, is not strictly covered by the objection because, as an actuation in the line of existence, it cannot, properly speaking, be said to inform the humanity of Christ; the humanity is not the material cause of the created grace of union, except in the very improper sense that essence can be called a material cause in relation to existence. De la Taille does speak of the human nature of Christ as exercising material causality with respect to the grace of union (*Ibid.*, p. 35), but it is not clear that he is there using material causality in the strict sense, any more than John of St. Thomas is to be accused of speaking strictly when he describes the divine Word as informing His humanity (*Cursus Theologicus*, Vol. 7, *De Incarnatione*, disp. 8, n. 20; cf. *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 68-69).

are material causes of supernatural realities: "the natural is a . . . cause of the supernatural," as Father Mullaney claims.¹⁴

However, this teaching of de la Taille is by no means an innovation peculiar to himself but the common teaching of St. Thomas and all Catholic theologians.¹⁵ Indeed, it is implicitly contained in the solemn teaching of the Council of Trent that grace is the formal cause of our justification and that it inheres in our souls.¹⁶ Hence, habitual grace is an accident inhering in the soul as in its substance, so that the soul, to the extent that it is the subject of inhesion for grace, is truly its material cause. In other words, the soul is a true material cause of the supernatural entity that is sanctifying grace in the sense that grace truly inheres in the soul. To deny this would be to teach implicitly the heresy of justification by imputation.

Consequently, the "material causality in the true sense" that Father Mullaney objects to in de la Taille must mean something more than that supplied by a substance to its accidents. What that inadmissible sense is, is indicated somewhat indirectly in the following passage:

Now a cause is a principle whence something originates or proceeds, with dependence in being. A material cause, in common with other true causes, actually contributes to the constitution and conservation of the effect. Thus, if de la Taille be correct, (the soul) positively contributes by its natural powers to the being of a . . . supernatural entity. . . .

The point of the difficulty is clear. Material causality involves an intrinsic positive proportion between the material cause and its formal complement. The material cause is subjective potency with regard to that form. Obediential potency on the contrary involves no such positive proportion between it and the form; there is only that objective capacity which is mere non-impossibility, non-reguance.

How, then, does a Thomist conceive the function of an obediential

¹⁴ *art. cit.*, p. 21, cited above, p. 237, note 11.

¹⁵ *Summa Theol.*, I II, q. 110, a. 2; II II, q. 171, a. 2.

¹⁶ Sessio VI, *Decretum de justificatione*, capp. 7 and 16 (Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, nn. 799 and 809).

potency? To be sure, that potency . . . is the subject *in which* the supernatural form is, but not a subject *out of which* it becomes, or is. Hence the substantial subject does have its existence, as it were, communicated to the supernatural form: but that subject in no sense contributes to the intrinsic constitution of the nature or essence of the form in question, for it cannot. Could it do so there would be no disproportion between the two, hence no supernaturality on the part of the form. Carefully, then, the Thomist distinguishes between essence and existence, between the form's *esse tale* and *inesse*. By *divine* power the *esse tale* is constituted, constituted as resident in this existent: between the existent and the form there is not repugnance—but neither is there that procession of the latter from the positive potentiality of the former, which constitutes the exercise of material causality properly so-called.¹⁷

We are here at the heart of the difficulty. The inadmissible “material causality in the true sense” involves a “positive proportion between the material cause and its formal complement,” in this case between the soul, as material cause, and the supernatural form that is sanctifying grace. Explaining his meaning further, Father Mullaney distinguishes between a “subject *in which* the supernatural form is” and a “subject *out of which* it becomes, or is.” The former type of subject is admissible in the case of a supernatural form; such a subject communicates merely its existence or *inesse* to the form, and it could be called, I presume, a material cause in only a loose sense. A subject *out of which* its form becomes or is, on the other hand, communicates not only *inesse*, but *esse tale* as well, that is, it “contributes to the intrinsic constitution of the nature or essence of the form”; the form proceeds “from the positive potentiality” of the subject. This “constitutes the exercise of material causality properly so-called,” and this, presumably, is what Father Mullaney understands de la Taille

¹⁷ *art. cit.*, pp. 15-17, *passim*. Father Mullaney is discussing, in this passage, the created grace of union. Since this is the only complete discussion of the objection, I have been compelled to adapt it slightly so that it applies to sanctifying grace, for the basic reason indicated above (n. 13). Parentheses and dots indicate the changes.

to mean whenever he talks of the human soul or intellect as being the material cause of a supernatural entity.

One could have wished at this juncture, since we are touching the heart of the most serious objection against de la Taille's entire doctrine, for extensive documentation of the positions that are being ascribed to him and for an exegesis of the pertinent passages sufficient to make certain that his doctrine is not being misinterpreted or taken out of context, especially since the point of the objection turns on the precise sense of the term material causality. This, like all metaphysical terms, is radically analogous and cannot mean exactly the same thing when applied to different levels of being. Furthermore, the notions of the four Aristotelian causes are derived from a consideration of changes in this material universe. Therefore, they cannot be applied *tale quale* to spiritual realities, let alone supernatural realities, whose very possibility Aristotle could not have suspected. If, then, a competent theologian does apply such notions to the supernatural order, it is reasonable to presume that he uses them in an analogous sense that respects the exigencies of revelation.

I have indicated that the use of the term material cause in regard to sanctifying grace is not only legitimate but necessary to safeguard Catholic dogma. What proof does Father Mulaney offer for his contention that de la Taille is using the term in an unacceptably strict sense, namely, that the human soul is the cause *out of which* grace arises, and that it communicates to grace both *in esse* and *esse tale*, with the result that there is a positive proportion between the soul and the grace that inheres in it? The nearest thing to a proof that I have been able to find occurs in the following passage:

Therefore, Père de la Taille's position that (the soul) is the material cause of (sanctifying grace) involves a denial of the proposition that (the human soul) is merely an obediential potency with respect to a supernatural reality. Note that de la Taille himself never conceived this material causality, of which he writes, as mere non-repugnance. Writing of formal and material causality he says very clearly, "There is a reciprocity of good offices, an exchange of

resources . . . there is mutual indebtedness and interdependence." He himself creates the difficulty: the difficulty of a supernatural effect dependent for its being on the "good offices . . . the resources" of a merely natural thing.¹⁸

Unfortunately, Father Mullaney does not give the context of his citation. De la Taille is talking about the relationship between material and formal causes in the natural, not the supernatural, order. This is evident from the two examples he uses of the souls of a lion and a man and also from the statement that follows almost immediately: "In the natural order, every actuation is information."¹⁹ In other words, actuation in the supernatural order cannot be judged by actuation in the natural order.

Furthermore, even in the case of a supernatural form, there is still a "reciprocity of good offices, an exchange of resources" that every Catholic theologian is obliged to recognize. The human soul does give sanctifying grace a subject of inhesion, it does give *inesse*, as Father Mullaney admits. He does not, however, offer evidence that de la Taille meant anything more than that in calling the soul the material cause of grace. The most, therefore, that Father Mullaney is authorized to conclude against de la Taille on the basis of his evidence is that he has not clearly defined his terms.

De la Taille has, unfortunately, not expatiated on his understanding of obediential potency, nor has he made use of Father Mullaney's valuable distinctions between a subject *in which* and a subject *out of which*, between *inesse* and *esse tale*. There is, however, an illuminating passage that characterizes the relationship between the natural and the supernatural as de la

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18. I would emphasize that it is perfectly correct to say that supernatural effects depend for their being on merely natural things. This is the teaching, at least, of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *De Gratia: Commentarius in Summam Theologicam Sancti Thomae I^{ae} II^{ae} q. 109-114* (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1946), p. 245: "Gratia est accidens inhaerens animae, ergo dependet a substantia animae in esse . . ."

¹⁹ *The Hypostatic Union*, p. 29.

Taille understands it. On the basis of this discussion we can form some judgment on whether he really means to assert the positive proportion that Father Mullaney rightly rejects.

In the first place, it is most evident that the pure Act (God) cannot be the connatural act of a receptive potency. If, in His gracious kindness, God makes Himself the act of such a potency, this will be an occurrence surpassing all connaturality, and will therefore be supernatural. Correlatively, the potency will not be natural with respect to the Act, but will be obediential. And that the desired correspondence or proportion between the potency and the Act may be established, a divinely infused adaptation will be needed: substantial actuation, if there is question of the order of being, as in the hypostatic union; habitual adaptation or disposition, if there is question of the order of intelligibility, as in the beatific vision.

Moreover, every ultimate disposition for the Act, being introduced by the Act Itself to which it is accommodated, is found to be indissolubly joined to the Act within the potency which it actuates. *This disposition, too, cannot but transcend the whole order of connaturality.*²⁰

Thus, de la Taille explicitly rejects all connaturality, not only between the uncreated Act and the created receptive potency, but also between the same created potency and the divinely infused adaptation that accommodates the potency to the Act. This disposition, a created actuation by uncreated Act, is infused by the Act as it unites itself to the potency. Its entire being is relative to the uncreated Act, precisely as gratuitously united to the potency, for it can only exist if, and to the extent that, the uncreated Act condescends to become the Act of the created potency.

Consequently, human nature is in obediential potency, not only to uncreated Act, but also to the ultimate disposition for the Act, namely, sanctifying grace, light of glory, or grace of union, depending on the case. "And everything that is connected with it as a disposition, whether proximate or remote,

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37. Emphasis added.

whether habitual or actual, will likewise be supernatural.”²¹ There is no connaturality or positive proportion between the potency of nature and any positive disposition for uncreated Act. The potency does have a passive aptitude for elevation, in that it is not repugnant to such an elevation as a stone or animal would be, but it cannot have an exigence for elevation. This much is equivalently contained in the words of de la Taille that I have cited, so that it is legitimate to conclude that his concept of obediential potency in no way offends against the severest demands of Catholic theology.

When, therefore, de la Taille speaks of nature as being a material cause of the supernatural, we are amply justified in giving the term a broad, analogous, and benign interpretation. He does deny most explicitly that grace is connatural to nature, which is another way of saying that nature has no positive proportion to the supernatural. Hence, it seems to me, we must admit that we do not have here an objective basis for censuring his doctrine as theologically dangerous.

Father Mullaney has a second reason for contending that de la Taille's hypothesis of a created actuation by uncreated Act is doctrinally dangerous:

. . . any “created actuation” springing from the union of God as Act and creature as potency must be a hybrid of the uncreated and the created, the supernatural and the natural, the infinite and the limited. It would be necessarily a medium between God and not-God. It is a contradiction.²²

²¹ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

²² *art. cit.*, p. 26. Although the objection that de la Taille's created actuation is a medium between God and not-God is not justified (Cf. *infra*, p. 247), a more valid objection would be that it is a medium between act and potency. For, in any supernatural union, God is Act, and nature is potency; the created actuation does not seem to be either, despite the fact that act and potency divide being. Of course, if a choice must be made, the actuation would have to be assigned to act rather than potency. Yet, this would seem to make of it a subordinate act that would mediate between the divine Act and created potency and thus destroy the immediacy of the union, contrary to de la Taille's intentions and the teachings of the Church, at least with regard to the beatific vision. To me, this is by far the strongest objection to the concept of a created actuation by uncreated Act.

Although this is proposed as a general objection to the entire theory, a difficulty intrinsic to the very concept of a created actuation by uncreated Act, Father Mullaney discusses it only in connection with de la Taille's application of his theory to the hypostatic union. The human nature of Christ, according to de la Taille, is actuated in the line of existence by the very existence of the Word of God. The eternal existence of the Word is thus the (existential) Act of His humanity, but the actuation, the grace of union, since it occurs in time, must be created, substantial, and supernatural.²³ Against this position Father Mullaney argues:

. . . de la Taille's position . . . is contrary . . . to the distinction, basic in all Christian thought, between Creator and creature . . . For what is "the supernatural" to which, according to de la Taille, the "created substantial actuation" postulated belongs? If "supernatural" signifies anything at all, as for Christians it must, it signifies that which is above created nature, and is proper to the Divine. . . .

Thus the supernatural exceeds created nature, and is proper to the divine order: a created substance or principle does not exceed created nature, cannot do so if it is created. Thus a supernatural created substantial reality *as* supernatural would pertain to the divine: as created to the non-divine. Hence infinite distinction between the Divine Creator and limited creature would be annihilated—*there would be a medium*. In all restraint may we not say that de la Taille's supposition is not alone un-Thomistic; it is, in addition, self contradictory and perilous at least to one basic point of faith.²⁴

The argument as presented is incomplete. It says that a created, substantial, supernatural reality is a contradiction in terms, because it would be both divine and non-divine: divine, as being supernatural; non-divine as being created. Such an argument as it stands, however, is invalid, since it proves too

I do not think that it is intrinsically unanswerable, even though I am not able to offer a satisfactory solution.

²³ *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 34-41.

²⁴ *art. cit.*, p. 20.

much. It implies that all created supernatural realities are contradictory, an evidently untenable conclusion for a Catholic: grace is certainly a reality that is both created and supernatural; one can say that, as created, it pertains to the non-divine, and that, as supernatural, it pertains to the divine. Thus, the equivocation latent in Father Mullaney's use of the word "divine" is clear when his argumentation is transferred to the case of habitual grace.

Consequently, I judge that what Father Mullaney means to say is that a created supernatural reality is a contradiction if it is a *substantial* reality.²⁵ In attempting to define Father Mullaney's objection with greater precision, however, a difficulty arises. In some passages dealing with this objection he speaks of a substantial reality, but in others he speaks of a substance. For example, he attributes to de la Taille "the repeated assertion of a created substance of the supernatural order—which as we have shown implies the denial of the real distinction between the supernatural and the natural orders."²⁶ In another place he says:

Thus if we suppose anything substantial, created, and supernatural, then the supernatural—which is above all creatures—enters in as an intrinsic constituent, as matter or form, of the creature. One and the same substantial principle is and is not above the created order.²⁷

Father Mullaney seems to be interpreting de la Taille's substantial, created actuation as being a partial substance, a substantial form that would enter into composition with Christ's human nature as form with matter and would make a *tertium quid*, a created, supernatural substance. I admit that

²⁵ Therefore, Father Mullaney's objection ceases to be a general difficulty, against the very concept of a created actuation by uncreated Act. There is question of a substantial actuation only in the case of the hypostatic union.

²⁶ *art. cit.*, p. 39.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10; cf. also pp. 20-21. In defense of his rejection of a created supernatural reality of the substantial order, Father Mullaney cites Billuart and St. Thomas (p. 19). However, both are talking about complete or partial substance and not about any sort of substantial reality.

this is a bizarre supposition, but it is the nearest to a coherent interpretation I have been able to draw from Father Mullaney's different discussions of his objection.²⁸

In any case, whether Father Mullaney's objection is directed against a complete or a partial substance that would be both created and supernatural, we must reject it as inapplicable. Substance, complete or partial, pertains to the order of essence; de la Taille's substantial created actuation pertains to the order of existence. Furthermore, de la Taille explicitly denies that his created grace of union is a substance or a part of a substance:

The grace of union, on the contrary, belongs to the substantial order, without being substance or part of substance: just as your own existence is substantial, although it is not you or any part of you but it is only an actuation of your essence in its capacity of substantial potency to existence. This is why St. Thomas refuses to call our existence an accident, although in the order of affirmations the attributing of existence either to our nature or to our person is always accidental, since existence is not essential to any created substance. But in the order of realities our existence is not any less substantial for all that.²⁹

In the face of this explicit statement of de la Taille, one is at a loss to explain Father Mullaney's complaint about "the repeated assertion of a created substance of the supernatural order . . ." If he had made a greater effort to document his interpretation of de la Taille, the purport of his objection might have been a little clearer. As it is, I can think of but one possible way in which the objection might still be valid: perhaps the reasons why a created supernatural substance is a contradiction apply also to a created actuation in the line of substantial existence.

²⁸ *art. cit.*, pp. 18-21, 26 and 39-40.

²⁹ *The Hypostatic Union*, p. 47; cf. also p. 35. It is curious to find that Father Mullaney, in his positive exposition of de la Taille's theory, implicitly quoted the second citation (*art. cit.*, p. 5). When he came to his criticism, he apparently forgot what he had previously written, unless, perhaps, he is convinced that every reality of the substantial order is a substance, a most un-Thomistic position.

I do not think that this can be proved. A supernatural created substance *by nature* would pertain to the created order. At the same time, however, the beatific vision and its principle, sanctifying grace, would be *connatural* to it, despite the fact that the beatific vision is a knowledge proper to God alone. In other words, the *nature* of a supernatural substance would be at the same time divine and non-divine; such a substance would be a contradiction.³⁰

This line of argumentation cannot be applied to de la Taille's created grace of union. It is a created actuation in the line of existence, not essence. Consequently, it neither is a nature nor essentially changes the nature of which it is the existential actuation. It can, indeed, like sanctifying grace, be called divine and non-divine, but not under the same aspect. Entitatively, it is created and, therefore, non-divine; terminatively, however, it is truly divine, because it adapts the humanity to the uncreated existence of the Word of God. A created actuation in the line of substantial existence is not, therefore, self-contradictory.

As far as I am able to judge, Father Mullaney's second main argument for proving that de la Taille's theory of the supernatural is doctrinally dangerous rests on a misunderstanding of the true nature of the created grace of union, which is not an actuation in the line of essence. It is quite possible that his objection has some other basis, but, if so, he has not stated it clearly. In any case, Father Mullaney has thus far failed to adduce anything solid on which to base his censure *doctrina non tuta*.

In addition to the two main objections Father Mullaney

³⁰ This argument is basically similar to the one used by Billuart (*Summa Sancti Thomae, Tractatus de Incarnatione*, diss. IV, a. 5, par. 4) and quoted by Father Mullaney (*art. cit.*, p. 19). He also quotes (*loc. cit.*) St. Thomas (*In II De Anima*, lect. 1, n. 213) to prove that "a supernatural, created reality of the substantial order is impossible," because "in defining substance 'nothing extrinsic is included . . .'" Paradoxically, this passage, when seen in its context, proves, on the contrary, that there are some realities of the substantial order in whose definitions something extrinsic must be included, namely, substantial forms, which cannot be defined without reference to matter.

offers two other theological objections against de la Taille's theory as applied to the special case of the hypostatic union. Since they are mentioned only in passing, it does not seem so necessary to treat them at great length. Both refer to de la Taille's contention that two existences, at least in some sense, must be admitted in Christ. Of these, one is the divine, uncreated *esse* of the Word of God, which becomes the existential Act of the human nature in the Incarnation. The other *esse* is the created actuation of the human nature by the divine *esse* of the Word.³¹ Against this position Father Mullaney first protests that, according to de la Taille's own principles, existence and personality are so intimately connected that he should logically conclude from two existences to two persons in Christ:

Interestingly in this very paragraph quoted by de la Taille, Cajetan asserts the similarity between a potentiality's being perfected by assumption to divine existence, and by assumption to divine personality. Now if, as Cajetan—the author of de la Taille's own selection—expressly says, these two are similar; and if assumption to divine existence implies a created existential actuation, as de la Taille says it does; should not the second—assumption to divine personality—similarly require a created actuation in the line of person? De la Taille concludes, as we have seen, to two existences in Christ, from the point of view of actuation. He should have concluded to two persons also, from the point of view of actuation.

³¹ *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 19-23, 40, and 72-75. I myself would prefer not to call the created grace of union a secondary, created existence (*esse*), despite the fact that it is an actuation in the line of existence, because it can be called an *esse* only in a very improper sense. Meaning, of course, is more important than terminology; yet, to speak of two *esse's* in Christ gives the impression of dividing Him into two beings. For, "*ens denominatur ab esse*," and "*ens et unum convertuntur*." Nonetheless, there is a growing opinion among some Thomists favoring the doctrine of two *esse's* in Christ, although not in quite the same form as de la Taille's. To mention a few: Dom Herman Diepen, O.S.B. "*La critique du basilisme selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*," *Revue Thomiste*, L (1950), pp. 313-324; Jacques Maritain, "Sur la notion de Subsistence," *Revue Thomiste*, LIV (1954), pp. 242-256, esp. p. 254, n. 1; Adrian Hastings, "Christ's Act of Existence," *The Downside Review*, LXXIII (1954-1955), pp. 139-159; and J.-H. Nicholas, O.P., "Chronique de Théologie dogmatique: Discussions autour de l'unité psychologique du Christ," *Revue Thomiste*, LIII (1953), pp. 427-428.

Father Mullaney continues his discussion in a footnote:

This point has special force in view of the peculiar view of personality adopted by de la Taille and erroneously ascribed by him to Capreolus. He writes "of the two terms, humanity and existence, the one that holds the other is the person" and again for de la Taille the whole problem of personality has a satisfactory solution "drawn from one principle only: namely, *the equation between created personality and ownership of created being.*" . . .

The whole point of de la Taille's theory is that the human nature of Christ *does* have, or own, its existential actuation distinct from the *esse Verbi* as creature from Creator. Thus in the same sense in which he predicates two existences of Christ he ought to predicate two persons.³²

As to de la Taille's citation of Cajetan, it should be clear that a mere quotation does not automatically imply approval of everything contained therein, much less of the doctrine presupposed by the citation. Cajetan holds that created personality is constituted by a substantial mode distinct from existence, a position that de la Taille explicitly rejects.³³ Granted, if he held Cajetan's theory of created personality together with his own theory of created actuation, de la Taille would be led to suppose a created actuation of the humanity of Christ in the line of personality. Similarly, if de la Taille identified created existence with created personality, he would again be forced to conclude to a created personality in Christ distinct from the Person of the Word. As it is, he holds neither of these hypotheses and is, therefore, not obliged logically to draw the erroneous conclusion.

Turning to Father Mullaney's footnote, I fear that the whole point of de la Taille's theory is *not* "that the human nature of Christ *does* have, or own, its existential actuation." Rather, the whole point of what de la Taille is saying is precisely the contrary, that the human nature of Christ does not own anything, but is, instead, entirely owned by the divine Person of the Word of God. The sacred humanity of the Word is, indeed,

³² *art. cit.*, p. 28 and n. 45.

³³ *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 17-19.

actuated by His personal Act of existence, and that actuation is distinct from the divine existence as creature from Creator. However, de la Taille nowhere says or wishes to imply that the humanity possesses its existential actuation as its own. On the contrary, he says that "the humanity is . . . no longer a person, because no longer self-contained, no longer the autonomous owner of being; but it is owned itself by One, Who being His own existence, imparts to the lower substance fellowship in being with Himself."⁴

This is the reason, therefore, why the assumption to divine personality does not, in de la Taille's view, involve a created personality: the essential note of personality lies in the autonomous ownership of being, but assumption to divine personality means precisely the *negation* of all autonomous ownership, save by the Person assuming. Hence, it does not follow that, because there are in some sense two existences in Christ, two persons must also be asserted.

Father Mullaney's final theological difficulty with de la Taille's theory of the hypostatic union centers on the problem of the special relationship that must exist between the divine Person of the Word and the created actuation which is the grace of union, such that the humanity is thereby united to the Word alone as to its Act of existence, and not to all three divine Persons:

Now according to what order of causality does this created actuation proceed from the *esse Verbi*? . . . Obviously Père de la Taille would not be satisfied with assigning to the Word merely efficient causality of this communication because all Catholics admit the efficiency of any one divine Person is the efficiency of the divine nature, common to all three Persons: if this were the Word's only causality of the actuation in question, Christ's humanity would be that of all three divine Persons. *Absit!* No, for Père de la Taille the "actuation" must be a quasi-formal effect of the *Verbum*. Very well—what is a quasi-formal cause in this theory? Is it an intrinsic or an extrinsic cause? The divine Word can be an *intrinsic* cause of no creaturely reality, or, stated the other way, no creature can be intrinsically divine, or non-creaturely. For intrinsic causes are two:

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

formal and material. It is according to faith that God can be the intrinsic form of no creature; and it is according to faith that He can be subject or matter of no compound. Thus the dilemma: if the *Verbum* is an intrinsic cause of the "actuation," then God has entered into creaturely composition, and a creature is intrinsically divine; if, contrarily, the *Verbum* is only an extrinsic cause of the "actuation," then either that actuation unites the humanity of Christ to all three divine Persons—a clear heresy—or it does not. If it does not, then the extrinsic causality in question is no different in kind from God's extrinsic causality of any other creaturely effect, with the result that the union of Christ's human nature to the *Verbum* could not be different in kind from any other creature's "union" with God, for every created thing, is, in its creaturely being, from God efficiently. On any reasonable supposition, then, de la Taille's position offers rather uncomfortable consequences.³⁵

Father Mullaney's argumentation is long and rhetorical. The essential is contained in the next-to-last sentence, because it is evident that, for de la Taille, the special causality is neither intrinsic nor such that the humanity is united to all three divine Persons.³⁶ Father Mullaney maintains that, if the special causality exercised by the Word of God in regard to the created grace of union is extrinsic and such that the humanity is not thereby united to all three divine Persons, "then the extrinsic causality in question is no different in kind from God's extrinsic causality of any other creaturely effect, with the result that the union of Christ's human nature to the *Verbum* could not be different in kind from any other creature's 'union' with God, for every created thing, is, in its creaturely being, from God efficiently." I must confess that the logic behind this line of reasoning escapes me. Father Mullaney seems to be saying, equivalently: if the causality is extrinsic and does not unite the humanity to all three divine Persons, then, as in the case of any creature's "union" with God, it does unite the humanity to all three divine Persons. Of course, the union that is being denied is a hypostatic union to the Trinity, whereas the union that is affirmed of all creatures is not hypostatic, so that the argumen-

³⁵ *art. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

³⁶ *The Hypostatic Union*, pp. 22, 30, 35, and 68-69.

tation is not a contradiction. Nonetheless, the consequence of the apodosis from the protasis of his conditional sentence is just not evident as it stands in the text. Nor does the added reason, that "every created thing is, in its creaturely being, from God efficiently" helped particularly, since the special causality involved is not efficient. Perhaps Father Mullaney is presupposing something that makes his argumentation flow logically. However, it seems futile to speculate what that something might be, since it is not expressed in the actual text, as far as I can determine.

In reply, however, to Father Mullaney's original question, "according to what order of causality does this created actuation proceed from the *esse Verbi*?" it is simple enough to say that it proceeds according to "quasi-formal causality."³⁷ In reply to the query, "Very well—what is a quasi-formal cause in this theory?", it is again easy to state that it is not an intrinsic cause nor an efficient cause. Final causality must like-

³⁷ The concept of "quasi-formal causality" goes back to Saint Thomas in the *Quaestio Disputata De Veritate*, q. 8, a. 1 and in the *Supplementum Partis Tertiae*, q. 92, a. 1, and ad 8. Its application to the hypostatic union is by no means peculiar to de la Taille, but is common to many outstanding theologians: Louis Cardinal Billot, S.J., *De Verbo Incarnato: Commentarius in Tertiam Partem S. Thomae* (Rome: Gregorian University, 6th edition, 1922), pp. 148-151 and 166-167; Karl Rahner, S.J., "Zur scholastischen Begrifflichkeit der ungeschaffenen Gnade," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, LXIII (1939), p. 147 with n. 16; Pietro Parente, *De Verbo Incarnato* (Rome: Marietti, 2nd edition, 1939), pp. 100-101. It also appears implicitly in Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik* (2nd edition of Carl Feckes), vol. 5, part 1 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1954), pp. 188-189 (par. 223, III, nn. 399-400). "Quasi-formal causality" does not seem to be de la Taille's own way of expressing the special relationship between the Word and the created grace of union; it does not appear at all in his expository article "Actuation créée par Acte increé," and only occurs in the following article, "Entretien amical d'Eudoxe et de Palamède sur la grâce d'union," in connection with the discussion of John of St. Thomas, who talks about the divinity informing the humanity in Christ (*The Hypostatic Union*, p. 69). De la Taille's own term is more vague (*Ibid.*, p. 35 and n. 8): "On the part of the Word as term, therefore, what we have to consider is not only a causal activity but a *function of a perceptive Act*, which is not, for all that, an informing Act. It goes without saying that on the side of the Word these two functions of efficient cause and *perceptive Act* are not really distinct; they denote two relations of reason, quite distinct in their kind, corresponding, on the side of created reality, to two relations that are really distinct." Emphasis added.

wise be eliminated, since that, too, is common to the Blessed Trinity. That leaves exemplary causality or a causality that is *sui generis*. Since I would not readily admit the latter alternative, I am personally inclined to opt for the former. I realize that most Thomists are inclined to reduce exemplary causality to either efficient or final, but their reasons have never appealed to me as convincing. Nor is it evident to me that exemplary causality must also be always common to the three Persons of the Trinity, and, indeed, if the theory of some that the souls of the just are related to each of the three divine Persons by a distinct relation be admitted, the conclusion of an exemplary causality that is not common seems inevitable. However, this last is admittedly personal speculation not contained in de la Taille's writings. Suffice it for the present that Father Mullaney's questions and dilemma are not unanswerable.³⁸

From this investigation I must conclude that Father Mullaney's condemnation of de la Taille's theory of the supernatural as "doctrinally dangerous" is not solidly founded on evidence. He objects that de la Taille implicitly obscures the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders because he makes nature a material cause of the supernatural and because he holds for a created supernatural reality of the substantial order. Furthermore, de la Taille's doctrine of two existences in Christ logically leads, on the basis of his own principles, to the affirmation of two persons in Christ. Finally, de la Taille cannot explain the special causality that the Word of God alone exercises in regard to the created grace of union without being forced logically into a doctrinally untenable position.

In reply to these objections, I have indicated that the im-

³⁸ It seems to me that this difficulty can be raised against any Thomistic theory of the hypostatic union that posits something created distinct from the humanity (cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, aa. 7 and 8: ". . . oportet dicere quod (unio naturae divinae et humanae) sit quiddam creatum . . . Omnis autem relatio quae incipit esse ex tempore, ex aliqua mutatione causatur . . ."). One can ask with Father Mullaney, "Now according to what order of causality does this created something (actuation, mutation, passion, relation, *esse*, etc.) proceed from the *esse Verbi*?"

plicit obscuring of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural follows only if the material causality of the natural be understood in a very strict and univocal sense; Father Mullaney has given no solid evidence that de la Taille intended that very strict meaning of the term. Similarly, the confusing of the two orders would follow if the created supernatural reality of the substantial order were a complete or a partial substance; de la Taille explicitly denies that his created grace of union, posited for the hypostatic union, is either. As for Father Mullaney's reasoning, two existences—two persons in Christ, this rests on a misunderstanding of de la Taille's doctrine, as though the humanity of Christ possessed the created existence as its own. Finally, Father Mullaney has not offered a clear proof of his contention that de la Taille cannot give an explanation of the special causality of the Word of God required by his theory that does not logically lead to theological error.

Thus, Father Mullaney's theological criticism of the theory of "created actuation by uncreated Act" is, in my judgment, very unsatisfactory. He has pointed out two lacunae in de la Taille's treatment, the failure to discuss in detail the nature of divine quasi-formal causality and created material causality in the supernatural order. However, this is not the same as proving the theory to be doctrinally dangerous. The imposition of theological censures is a serious thing. Therefore, it seems to me that, before a verdict such as Father Mullaney has passed against de la Taille be arrived at, a most painstaking investigation into the evidence should be required. I do not find that Father Mullaney has taken a scholarly care proportionate to the gravity of his undertaking.

WILLIAM MACOMBER, S. J.

*Pontifical Oriental Institute,
Rome, Italy*

DE LA TAILLE AND THE INCARNATION: A REJOINDER



I

THE THOMIST, in January, 1954, published an article in which I proposed some criticisms of Father de la Taille's theory of created actuation by uncreated Act.¹ Those criticisms were directed both at the theory in general and also at the three applications made by its author, namely, to sanctifying grace, to the light of glory, and to the Incarnation.

This issue of THE THOMIST carries the reply of Father Macomber, S. J. to my criticisms; a reply which the editors kindly permitted me to read in advance of its publication. Other discussions of my criticism have also been published in the five years since its appearance.²

For my own part, I think that for two reasons such discussion is distinctly valuable. First, de la Taille's theory merits serious attention. In the judgment of some thoroughly competent theologians it constitutes an impressive contribution to theological development. Therefore, the elucidation of points conceded by all to be somewhat obscure in de la Taille's own presentation, and the spelling out of the implications of the theory are necessary and useful as aiding in the formation of a more or less wise judgment.

Secondly, both the theory and discussions centering about it are part of the larger context of modern theological orientation. Clearly the characteristic theological preoccupation for a very long time has been the great mystery of God's dealings with His rational creature, and that creature's stumbling approach

¹ Mullaney, T. U., O.P. *The Incarnation: de la Taille vs. Thomistic Tradition*, THE THOMIST, XVII (1954), pp. 1-41.

² Cf. De Letter, P., S.J., "Created Actuation by Uncreated Act," *Theological Studies*, 18, pp. 60-92.

to God.³ Quite possibly discussion of Father de la Taille's particular theory might help shed light on that broader mystery, because his theory does touch on the fundamental problem of the relation of the natural to the supernatural.

Certainly, however, Father Macomber and I—and our readers—will agree that in such discussion between us everything else must be secondary to the two central questions: 1) What did de la Taille teach? 2) Is that teaching acceptable in light of certain theological tradition? In this answer to Father Macomber, therefore, I shall not attempt a line by line answer to his criticisms of my original article. To points in his article which seem to be immediately concerned with the procedure of my criticism rather than with the content and validity of de la Taille's theory I shall not attempt a reply.⁴ This, of course, implies neither a reflection on Father Macomber's treatment of those points nor an implication that I consider them unassailable; I simply hope we can avoid any needless shifting of the focus of discussion.

Three distinct criticisms of the theory of created actuation by uncreated Act were urged in my original article, namely that 1) it "denies by implication the distinction between the supernatural and the natural orders; 2) it rests upon a confusion between being and becoming, between formal and efficient causality; 3) it is therefore inherently unacceptable and certainly un-Thomistic."⁵

³ To this very general mystery pertain, for example, Mariology, Josephology, Ecclesiology, and sacramental theology, etc., all of which have been for some time areas of very vital discussion and development.

⁴ On this ground I shall not answer, for instance, Father Macomber's assertions a) that my original paper was poorly documented; b) that some of my argumentation is obscure, or incomplete, or inadequate; c) that I sometimes poorly state my own position—for example, "Father Mullaney means to say" d) that my terminology amounts to a theological censure, and so forth. Candor urges me to confess that I think these points can be refuted; on the other hand, to go into them might quickly divert discussion from de la Taille's doctrine. In any case, since interested readers can make their own judgment on such questions, I shall not deal with these and several other rather minute criticisms of my paper, lest discussion become "bogged down."

⁵ Cf. Mullaney, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

Father Macomber 1) answers the first point at some length; 2) leaves the second "for subsequent treatment"; 3) dismisses in one sentence the judgment that de la Taille's theory is un-Thomistic. "A theological theory is not false merely because it is novel, nor is Thomistic tradition the only legitimate tradition allowed by the Church to theologians."

My second point, therefore, is not now under discussion; the third is quickly dismissed; the first is the major area of present disagreement. Father Macomber and I agree that certain "minor" points are also controverted between us.

II

The problem of the relevance of de la Taille's theory to the doctrine of Saint Thomas (the third point of my original criticism) is not, I think, a minor consideration that can be adequately dismissed by merely stating that other traditions are allowed by the Church to theologians. For very many theologians the question, "Is this theory opposed to Thomistic tradition?", will be an important factor in any more or less final judgment they shall make. Therefore, it seems to me that more must be said on this point than the single sentence Father Macomber offers.

In point of fact the theory with which we are concerned is contrary to St. Thomas and to Thomistic tradition. This I showed at length in my earlier article: this Father Macomber does not question.⁶

Now is that fact—undisputed by Father Macomber—of importance?

First of all, de la Taille considered this question to be of such considerable importance that he made very extensive efforts—

⁶ Father De Letter, S.J. in the article referred to above (footnote 2) differs considerably from Father Macomber in his answer to this and other points of my original criticism of de la Taille. My intention to consider his and Father Macomber's article simultaneously proved quite impractical, among other reasons because it would certainly have made this paper much too lengthy. Especially since Father De Letter's paper appeared in another journal my own discussion of it would less properly belong in *THE THOMIST*.

however unsuccessful—to relate his theory to traditional Thomism. The entire approach of his third (and most lengthy) exposition of the theory is to show its “Thomistic” roots; in his earlier two expositions page after page is given over to an exegesis of Saint Thomas and some few of his commentators. To the theory, then, as understood, developed and taught by its author, its relation to Thomism was not a matter of relative indifference; he did not consider that his doctrine might equally well be opposed to Thomism.

But, secondly, is doctrinal harmony with the teaching of St. Thomas important to this or any other theological theory? Quite apart from the intention of a given author, such as de la Taille, is consonance with St. Thomas’ teaching important in itself?

Only the teaching of the Church is the standard or measure of doctrinal soundness; if any particular Christian doctor enjoys real authority, the weight of such authority is wholly derived from the teaching authority of the Church. This St. Thomas himself states, “The teaching of Catholic doctors has its authority from the Church.”⁷

Now what authority does the Church bestow on Saint Thomas? Among all Christian doctors his authority is unique as the legislation of the Church makes clear;⁸ but unique not just in the sense that his doctrine alone is “canonized” but even in the sense that, according to the Supreme Pontiff Saint Pius X: “If the doctrine of any other author or saint has ever been approved at any time by Us or Our predecessors with singular commendation joined with an invitation and order to propagate and defend it, it may easily be understood that *it was commended only in so far as it agreed with the principles of Aquinas or was in no way opposed to them.*”⁹ Hence, even as to those authors *approved* by the Holy See the extent of their agreement with St. Thomas’ principles (or at least their in no way opposing him) is the measure of the Church’s approba-

⁷ *Summa Theol.* II-II, q. 10, a. 12.

⁸ *C. I. C.* c. 1366, § 2.

⁹ *Motu Proprio, Doctoris Angelici*, 29 June 1914 AAS, 6 (1914).

tion of them. And for this there is most serious reason: namely, the certain and considered judgment of the Holy See that "St. Thomas is the surest rule of Christian doctrine"¹⁰ so that those who depart from him, especially in theology, "seem to effect ultimately their own withdrawal from the Church."¹¹

The fact—unchallenged by Father Macomber—that de la Taille's theory is opposed to St. Thomas' teaching and to Thomistic tradition does seem to be of moment in forming a judgment about that theory. It is of moment not because a particular disputant may have a predilection for Aquinas; it is of moment because of the incomparable authority with which the Church has invested Saint Thomas. One can say, and say truly, "other traditions are allowed by the Church to theologians"; but one must add "Yet no other doctrine, as *other*, that is, in so far as it is opposed to St. Thomas, is approved by the Holy See: and this for the very grave reason that (according to Pope Saint Pius X) those who depart from Saint Thomas, especially in theology, seem ultimately to effect their departure from the Church herself." To adhere to St. Thomas out of one's personal enthusiasm or preference would be a mere human prejudice more harmful perhaps than helpful to one's growth in doctrine; but to adhere to St. Thomas on account of the authority of the Roman Church and out of obedience to that Church is to be most sure of adhering to the Church itself. So teach the Supreme Pontiffs.

We cannot therefore dismiss in one sentence the significance of the fact that the theory of created actuation by uncreated Act is un-Thomistic. That fact is of primary importance in any theological judgment of the theory; of primary importance, I may be permitted to repeat, not because one may happen to like St. Thomas, but because of the unique authority given him by the Catholic Church.

¹⁰ Pope Benedict XIII, Bull, *Demissas preces*, 6 Nov. 1724 Cf. Berthier, J. J. *Sanctus Thomas Aquinas—Doctor Communis Ecclesiae*. (Rome: 1914), p. 147.

¹¹ Letter to Fr. Pegues, 17 Nov. 1907. Cf. Berthier, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

III

The conclusion that de la Taille's theory denies by implication the distinction between the natural and the supernatural orders Father Macomber refutes throughout most of his article; with it he is chiefly concerned.

Yet in his representation of my criticism, a preliminary clarification is, unfortunately, necessary. Father Macomber writes, "There are two reasons why Father Mullaney thinks that the supposition of a created actuation by uncreated Act implicitly denies the distinction . . . between the supernatural and the natural orders. One objection is that any such created actuation 'springing from the union of God as Act and the creature as potency must be a hybrid of the uncreated and the created, the supernatural and the natural . . .' The other difficulty is that a created actuation by uncreated Act makes a created nature contribute positively to a supernatural effect." The first objection, Father Macomber adds, I confined "to the special case of the hypostatic union" but "the second difficulty finds a more general application to all aspects of the theory." Elsewhere, Father Macomber repeats, the first of these two objections I "proposed as a general objection to the entire theory . . ." but that I actually discussed it "only in connection with de la Taille's application to his theory to the hypostatic union."

Very gently, may I suggest that Father Macomber has not quite grasped the unity of my argumentation? In *every* alleged instance of created actuation by uncreated Act we would encounter "a hybrid of the supernatural and the natural" *because* according to the implications of de la Taille's doctrine the natural element as a true material cause would positively and intrinsically contribute to the constitution of a supernatural reality. That was and is my point. There is but one objection here, not two: the difficulty, namely, that on the supposition of a natural thing's being the true material cause of a supernatural actuation that actuation, because intrinsically caused by a natural reality, would bridge the divine and the non-divine, the supernatural and the natural orders.

This difficulty I applied not alone "to the case of the hypostatic union" but also to de la Taille's teaching on the light of glory and on habitual grace.¹² The applications of the objection differed slightly in each case, to be sure, as the particular instance under discussion required; but the same principle of argumentation was used throughout that portion of my discussion. Thence I concluded that the one difficulty is intrinsic to the very notion of created actuation by uncreated Act as the notion is proposed by de la Taille.

On this point, then, I think that the question argued between Father Macomber and myself can be thus stated: Does de la Taille implicitly teach that the natural potency is, in each instance of "created actuation by uncreated Act," a true material cause of the supernatural actuation, intrinsically entering into its essential constitution?

On one phase of the question there can be no disagreement—namely that de la Taille expressly maintains that the natural potency is the material cause of the supernatural actuation; and that, conversely the actuation informs the natural potency.¹³ What is controverted is how de la Taille understood

¹² Relative to the light of glory I wrote, "There is immediate evidence of de la Taille's breakdown of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural orders; for here, too, a mere creature is presented as being true and intrinsic cause of an effect which is properly supernatural." Mullaney, O.P., *op. cit.*, pp. 23, 24. With respect to de la Taille's account of habitual grace, I wrote, "Here . . . de la Taille, whatever his intention, does implicitly deny the distinction between the natural and the supernatural orders . . . there is involved on the side of the . . . created nature, material causality in the true sense, with respect to a supernatural entity; the natural is a true cause of the supernatural." *Ibid.*, 21. With regard to the treatment of Christ's grace of union, I wrote, "Père de la Taille . . . denies, by implication, the real and vastly important distinction between the natural and the supernatural orders. For, note that the created actuation of Christ's human nature by the Word is supernatural . . . yet this eminently supernatural reality informs the human nature of Christ, according to de la Taille; conversely, the human nature is the material cause." *Ibid.*, p. 15. To me it seems evident that here one same objection is urged in three different areas.

¹³ Speaking of the supposition of a creature as a material cause of a supernatural reality Father Macomber says "that de la Taille does hold this supposition cannot be denied . . . the natural is a . . . cause of the supernatural." He adds that this is the common teaching of Saint Thomas and all theologians; that it is

“material causality” and “information of the potency” in this context. Did he mean that the natural potency positively contributes by its own resources to the supernatural effect? My position is that he means just that, according to the ordinary sense of his words; Father Macomber thinks that de la Taille meant something other than that. Maintaining that de la Taille did not use his terms in the sense in which he, de la Taille, had already defined them, Father Macomber in turn leaves the terms, at the end of his discussion, still undefined.

In order to determine what de la Taille did teach one must reread his own words. Here, in order to show that nothing is taken out of context, I must quote a fairly lengthy passage at the outset of de la Taille’s second exposition of his remarkable theory. Having indicated what he means by actuation he writes,

Such actuation is called *information* if *the act is dependent on the potency* either for its existence, as in the case of a lion’s soul, or at any rate for the integration of its radical energies as in the case of the human soul. In this event we see that, *if the act gives, it also receives . . . There is reciprocity of good offices, an exchange of resources, however unequal they may be; there is mutual indebtedness and interdependence. This is what we mean to convey by the terms, formal causality and material causality.* The potency is then called matter, the act is called form, and the actuation of the one by the other is called information.

In the natural order, every actuation is information.

implicitly contained in the solemn teaching of the Council of Trent. At least, then there is agreement as to the fact of de la Taille’s teaching on the matter.

Father Macomber’s statement that this position of de la Taille is the common teaching of theologians, implicit in defined dogma, with the consequence that to question it is implicitly to question divine truth is, let me say, misleading. What is commonly agreed and what is of faith is that grace, a supernatural accidental reality, inheres in the soul. But de la Taille’s teaching that the natural “good offices” and “resources” of the soul are an intrinsic cause of such realities is not of common agreement nor of faith, implicit or explicit. And, without offense to anyone, I must say that it is striking that Father Macomber nowhere in his paper explicitly states what he conceives to be the role of a natural power with respect to supernatural modification, such as grace. While he expresses approbation of my position, in stating that the distinctions I made (p. 17 of my original article) are “valuable,” he does not at any time express his own position, nor even what he thinks was de la Taille’s position in this most crucial question.

Is the same true in every possible order? The answer is clearly in the negative if the uncreated Act of being or of intelligibility or of life ever unites itself, as such, to a created potency. If this takes place, there will be actuation, but there will be no information in the sense just defined. The uncreated Act cannot be dependent on a creature in any way whatever. It will give itself and will receive nothing. Therefore, no material causality will be found on the side of the creature . . .

What, then, will happen? There will be a communication of the Act to the potency; there will be a reception of the Act in the potency; there will be a perfecting of the potency by the Act, an amelioration, a change. This 'change' is not nothing; it is something. It is assuredly not the uncreated Being, which is changeless; it is not the created potency which is its subject and which it informs. It is something created, within the potency: an infused adaptation of the potency by the Act: hence created actuation by uncreated Act. If the question is asked what particular relation this change bears, as such, to the Act, the answer must be that, since it is a joining of the potency to the Act, it is the relation essentially inherent in the union with reference to the term of the union.¹⁴

Here we find, it seems to me, three closely related propositions: 1) Actuation is information if the act is *dependent* on the potency. "In this event . . . if the act gives, it also receives"; there is "reciprocity of good offices, an exchange of resources . . . mutual indebtedness and interdependence" 2) Of God, conceived as uniting Himself as Act to a created potency, this dependence is not verified. In this case "no material causality will be found on the side of the creature" precisely because God "cannot be dependent on a creature." 3) Nevertheless, in the case of God's uniting Himself to a creature there is produced in that creature "an infused adaptation" which is "created actuation by uncreated Act"; it is "something created" whose subject is the creature (potency) "which it informs."

In summary: *Information* as a special kind of actuation in-

¹⁴ de la Taille, *The Hypostatic Union and Created Actuation by Uncreated Act*. Translated by Rev. Cyril Vollert, S.J. (West Baden Springs, Indiana: 1952), pp. 29, 30.

cludes dependence on a material cause. Because God (uncreated Act) cannot be dependent on a creature He does not *inform* the creature to which He is joined; but whenever God is united to a creature there arises in the creature a created actuation which does *inform* (depend upon, as upon a material cause) the creature.

It is worth noting that when Father de la Taille comes to treat in particular of each alleged instance of created actuation by uncreated Act he, in most explicit terms, affirms either that the actuation informs (depends upon, as upon a material cause) the natural potency, or that the potency is the actuation's material cause, or both. For instance, only a few paragraphs after the passage quoted above we read that the light of glory is such an actuation; and then "of course this created actuation of the potency informs its subject; it is dependent on the latter as on its material cause."¹⁵

The question is clear: in asserting that the natural potency is the material cause of the created actuation which informs that potency, does de la Taille by "material cause" mean a passive principle which positively contributes from "its own resources" and by its own "good offices" to the intrinsic constitution of the effect? I see no real possibility for a negative answer. In the context, de la Taille having defined a material cause as including positive contribution to the effect, and positive dependence of the effect immediately applies these notions to the supernatural order and draws two conclusions: 1) with respect to the Act (God) the creature does not exercise such causality, there is "no information *in the sense just defined*." Here, then, in the application, to the supernatural order, of the notion of *information* there is no shift of meaning; 2) with respect to the created actuation the creature *does* exercise material causality and is therefore informed by that actuation. In the same context the same author uses the same already defined terms in applications to the same (supernatural) order and asserts that he is using those terms in the sense defined!

¹⁵ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, p. 32. Relative to sanctifying grace Cf., p. 34; to the grace of union, p. 35.

To say then that in the second conclusion he means by his terms something totally different from what he (in the first conclusion) says he means, seems to me simply unjustified. Father Macomber writes that the meaning of the terms in the second application is so different from their meaning in the preceding application (that is, "in the sense just defined") that the former *cannot even be judged* by the definition de la Taille has given his own terms. "Actuation in the supernatural order cannot be judged by actuation in the natural order."; so says Father Macomber. But de la Taille, by his own testimony, *did* (in the first conclusion) *apply his terms to the supernatural order* "in the sense just defined," that is, as including intrinsic dependence of the effect on a natural creature as a material cause. And that by "material causality" and "information" even as related to the created supernatural actuation de la Taille meant the terms "in the sense defined" is very clear from his own statement that the supernatural actuation contracts "a dependence with respect to the potency as does *every* created actuation."¹⁶ Of at least one created actuation he asserted that dependence on a material cause which was the sole reason for excluding information and material causality "in the sense defined" with respect to God. Pure Act then cannot inform *because it cannot be dependent*; but the created actuation "is *dependent* on the latter," i. e. the potency, "as on a material cause." Hence material causality is here taken "in the sense defined"—that is, the ratio of a created actuation by uncreated Act does not exclude, but includes intrinsic dependence on a merely natural element or potency.

Granted that this is the meaning of de la Taille, what is objectionable in it? The alleged created actuations by uncreated Act are, according to de la Taille, essentially super-

¹⁶ de la Taille expressly states that by the supernatural actuation's "inhering" in the subject he *does* mean "contracting a dependence with respect to the potency as *every* created act does" (*op. cit.*, p. 67. Emphasis added). Therefore when he asserts that natural potencies are informed by, and are material cause of supernatural actuations he implies that the supernatural is as intrinsically dependent on its potency as is *every* other created act, even natural actuations.

natural.¹⁷ All agree that he so teaches; Father Macomber in particular strongly and effectively insists that this is explicit in de la Taille. But a material cause "in the sense defined"—upon whose "resources and good offices" the formal cause is "dependent"—enters into the intrinsic constitution of the effect, according to the constant tradition of Scholasticism. Therefore we have a hybrid of the supernatural and the natural orders, something that bridges the distance between the two: one reality intrinsically constituted by positive contribution from each of these orders. Between the orders there is positive proportion; their mutual "good offices" coalesce in "created actuations by uncreated Act."

This conclusion, so justifiably rejected by Father Macomber, is implicit in de la Taille's teaching.

Father Macomber grants that de la Taille asserts that the natural is the material cause of the alleged supernatural actuations but suggests that "material causality" here has some special sense. He does not claim that any indication can be found in de la Taille's text of what that sense is, but says rather that de la Taille does not clearly define, in this context, how he uses the term. Father Macomber, omitting to state what, in his interpretation, the definition would be, says merely that from the natural order we cannot reach judgments about the supernatural order in this question of actuations.

May I point out, without any offense to anyone, that this position is more destructive of de la Taille's work than is my own? For, as we have seen, de la Taille first defines his terms; then immediately applies them to the supernatural order. If, in that application, the meaning of the terms is so different from the defined meaning—and Father Macomber says it is—that from the defined meaning we simply "cannot judge" about their meaning in their application then de la Taille was 1) simply foolish to give the definitions he does give, and 2) even worse, the whole exposition of his theory is meaningless for he is using terms, natural words, in a sense that "cannot be judged"

¹⁷ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, pp. 36, 37.

by any natural analogue. If the meaning of such words as "information," "actuation" and "material causality," key terms in de la Taille's entire theory, cannot be judged from the natural order, then no one can ever know, nor could de la Taille himself know, what de la Taille was talking about. Such a conclusion, Father Macomber and I would agree, is intolerable.

The alternative—de la Taille's doctrine implies positive proportion between the supernatural and the natural orders, a hybrid of the two—may seem to be rendered doubtful by de la Taille's explicit statements, quoted by Father Macomber, that there is no such proportion. One must conclude, I think, merely that what de la Taille explicitly says and what he unwittingly implies may conceivably be quite different. Many an author, many a theologian, has at some time defended a position whose real but hidden implications were contrary to that author's explicit convictions. This is a human danger, quite common. That one fall into it is no more a reflection upon one than is one's general limits; for what is involved is human limitation. Should another happen to see and point out the implication, he must be aware that he may in the very act fall into the same trap. But one gets up.

For the sake of testing de la Taille's theory so far as we can, within the limits of the present discussion, we might profitably investigate a possible interpretation suggested, but not adopted or defended, by Father Macomber. Let us prescind from the created potency's role of true material cause (*materia ex qua*) of the alleged created actuations by uncreated Act; let us consider the potency merely as subject in which the actuation is (*materia in qua*); a point of view which is not alien to Father Macomber's interpretation of de la Taille.¹⁸

¹⁸ The "subject" of a form may be either a true material cause *ex quo resultat effectus*—or merely a subject *in which* the form resides, as I pointed out in my paper of five years ago. Father Macomber seems to suggest, though he does not state, that when de la Taille speaks of a natural thing as the material cause of a supernatural actuation he should be interpreted to mean merely a subject *in which* and not a true material cause. In this sense I say that such a consideration is not alien from Father Macomber's interpretation—though, as I should have shown, I do think it is alien to the real implications of de la Taille's theory.

Even here we encounter difficulty which seems to me to be very substantial.

First as to habitual grace, as one instance of "Created actuation by uncreated Act"; then as to the light of glory; thirdly as to Christ's grace of union.

Grace according to Saint Thomas and de la Taille is a quality in the essence of the soul; a habit, an entitative habit. But according to de la Taille it is also the potency's "union with the subsistent Act";¹⁹ a "possession of the Act by the potency," a "deep-seated union underlying love itself"²⁰ whereby "the essence of the soul . . . finds itself united and henceforth wedded to the divine essence and associated with divine life."²¹ It is, in short, "the relation essentially inherent in the union *with reference to the TERM of the Union.*"²²

Now can any entitative habit of the soul be a "deep seated union" whereby "the essence of the soul . . . finds itself united . . . wedded to the divine essence"? Short of a hypostatic union God can be united to a creature in two ways: a) as agent cause and in this way He is always present to all creatures; b) as object of the creature's activities, and in this way God is present to the rational creature in so far as He is object known and loved. Very explicitly St. Thomas writes that the special presence of God through grace *is* the union with God achieved by the operation of faith and hope.²³

The first of these presences is of the natural order; only the second is supernatural. Yet the second kind of union is intentional, affective, a union not in being (for the soul of the just man *is* not God) but in knowledge and in love (the just man *loves* God).

Now if habitual grace, a habit in the *essence* of the soul (prior, in nature, to faith and charity) achieves a union of the created "essence of the soul . . . to the divine essence" God is as term either of the soul's essence or of its activities. But, de la Taille says, grace unites to God not the soul's activi-

¹⁹ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²³ Cf. *Summa Theol.* I, q. 43, a. 3.

ties but its *essence*. Not its activities, we might add, exactly because grace is in the essence of the soul, and that essence is not, cannot be, immediately operative with respect to any object; if it were, for the soul *esse est operari*—which is true only of God.

So, de la Taille says, grace, as prior in nature to faith and love, unites the soul's *essence* to God as term. Now, the only terms to which substantial essence is uniteable are person, and existence (if one distinguishes between them), because between a thing terminated (soul as to its essence) and its formal termination there must be correspondence; the *substantial essence* of the soul demands the *substantial* termination which is personality or existence. Therefore, if de la Taille be correct, sanctifying grace is a union to a *substantial* term; it is hypostatic union to divine person or persons; or else a substantial entitative union to divine existence. In any case, every man in the state of grace would be substantially divine.

Now certainly de la Taille wished to teach nothing so absurd. But if we accept St. Thomas' and de la Taille's teaching that habitual grace is in the *essence* of the soul; and if we add de la Taille's original contribution that grace *is* the union with God as term, then I think that absurdity must follow.

A similar difficulty suggests itself with regard to the light of glory as an instance of created actuation by uncreated Act. This *lumen*, de la Taille describes as "precisely the means whereby the intellect is raised to the divine object immediately; or better, it is this immediate union itself."²⁴ And again, "The disposition for both Act and the operation which at the same time is the change of the potency and the union of the potency with the Act—all this is the light of glory."²⁵ So de la Taille formally identifies "these two things in the blessed: the union of the intellect with the uncreated 'Form' and the 'mutation' (which is assuredly created) of the intellect."²⁶ Thus for de la Taille the light of glory is the *union* of the intel-

²⁴ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

lect with the divine intelligible; which union gives the *power* to see God for "the divine essence will not have the function of the intelligible form in my intellect unless my intellect is affected by this Act . . . to the point of being endowed with the *power* to see and penetrate that Act."²⁷ At once the union and the power to be united—"all this is the light of glory."

The effective divine producing of a power in the creature is—so we are told—precisely the same reality as the creature's union, through its created action, with the term of that operation; hence the power *is* the operation; *posse operari est operari*. For, note, it is the 'mutatio' in the creature that is identical with the union; and 'mutatio' here names the power, the *lumen* as received, or as proceeding efficiently from God. So God's infusing the *lumen* to which corresponds reception of the power or *lumen*: this *is* the operation of knowing by the *lumen*. Truly *posse est operari* in this account.

Again we have a choice. If we shall accept from Saint Thomas and from de la Taille the teaching that the light of glory is effectively from God present to the mind as agent cause, and that from this *lumen* and the mind proceeds the vital act of vision we have (in very incomplete fashion) some notion of traditional teaching. If we shall add de la Taille's original contribution—the light of glory *is* the immediate union to the Act—we have an impossibility.

The hypostatic union is the third instance of an alleged created actuation by uncreated Act. Here, too, let us prescind from de la Taille's implicit doctrine that this substantial actuation, ("at the summit of the supernatural") is intrinsically, materially caused by a natural thing. We simply inquire, therefore, whether any difficulty arises from de la Taille's teaching as now interpreted to mean nothing more than that the grace of union is in Christ's humanity as in a subject *in quo sed non ex quo*.

Patently difficulty arises from de la Taille's own words. The hypostatic union he describes as a union which is "inhering in

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

the humanity.”²⁸ Taken in the obvious sense this is equivalent to saying that the hypostatic union is a created accident whose subject is Christ’s human nature. St. Thomas expressly teaches that this is one secondary but legitimate meaning of the phrase “grace of union.”²⁹ Had de la Taille stopped here there would be no problem.

To any reader of de la Taille it is very apparent—Father Macomber agrees—that de la Taille also taught that the grace of union is 1) of the substantial, not of the accidental, order; 2) of the order of existence, not of essence. De la Taille wrote “Here again we have an actuation by uncreated Act: a created actuation as before, but this time of a substantial order, not an accidental order, because it brings the human nature into existence, and into an existence that is not of an accidental, but of a substantial order. This substantial actuation is precisely the grace of union; created grace, . . . but a truly substantial adaptation and conformation to the Word; yet not a substance nor part of a substance; no more so than the substantial existence of creatures forms part of their substance . . .”³⁰

Grace of union in Christ is then a created, existential actuation of the substantial order, “at the summit of the supernatural.” This is the passive actuation in the substantial human nature of Christ; it is also the immediate union itself to divinity for by it “in His very humanity Christ is Son, the only Son of God, by nothing else than the eternal generation . . . there is not, and there cannot be, on the part of God, a fuller donation of Himself than that by which He becomes . . . the very act of existence whereby the created substance exists.”³¹

Here difficulty multiplies.

There is *first* the difficulty that the grace of union is said to be both of the order of existence and also something caused by the divine Act of existence. Now the Act of existence coming to a nature causes in it precisely nothing: for the existence is to the nature as term, not as cause. Existence gives itself: it gives the

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

²⁹ *Summa Theol.* III, q. 2, a. 7.

³⁰ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 35.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

perfection of being: from it no effect can possibly proceed. As John of St. Thomas points out, a principle that terminates formally as terminative cannot be formally as cause to that whose term it is.³² In particular, existence cannot cause an effect in the nature because it is precisely that by which a thing is placed outside its cause, not that from which proceeds some effect into the nature, an effect distinct from existence and dependent, as to its being, on that existence. Existence *is* term, not cause. Therefore, that the grace of union be simultaneously an effect of the existential Act and union of the created nature to its term (divine existence) is impossible. *From existence no-thing proceeds.*

There is a *second* difficulty, namely, that given de la Taille's supposition the grace of union must—impossibly—enter into some kind of substantial union with Christ's created nature, or else be a mere accident. For de la Taille supposes 1) that personality does not precede, in nature, the advent of existence: ownership of existence constitutes the person so that the advent of personality and of existence are one; 2) that the grace of union is dispositive to divine existence: it is "adaptation and conformation to the Word";³³ it is "a disposition,"³⁴ "a divinely infused adaptation" needed in order that "the desired correspondence or proportion between the potency and the Act may be established."³⁵ Hence as a disposition or proportion, previous in nature to the formal union, (with which it is formally identical!) its subject is the humanity not yet personalized or existing only nature, substance, precedes the person. Therefore the actuation must enter into *substantial* union with the nature; or if it is conceived as a disposition subsequent to the Person (and the existence) then it is accidental for modifications following suppositivity are predicable accidents. We have already seen that de la Taille implies, in fact, that the actuation is an accident which "inheres" in the human nature.

In summary: if one takes into account de la Taille's various

³² John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, II, p. 200. (Reiser edition).

³³ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

descriptions of this "created actuation" which is grace of union one must conclude that it is a) of the existential order, as de la Taille maintains, yet b) not of the existential order but an *effect* produced by the existential act; although existence is not a cause producing effects; c) it is not a substance nor part of a substance, as de la Taille maintains; yet d) since it is a "disposition . . . to the Word" it must enter into substantial composition with the human nature, and so be substantial; or else e) it is an accident following the personified nature although f) de la Taille teaches it is not an accident.

The confusion arises, may I suggest, from de la Taille's statements, taken in their obvious sense. I do not create it; I indicate it.

Nor can we escape the confusion by saying, for example, "the actuation is neither prior nor subsequent to the Word: it is concomitant with His advent, for it is of the *existential* order, and He comes to the humanity as its existential Act communicating, bestowing, the created actuation." This, I say, is no escape: for even as an existential actuation the grace of union is, according to de la Taille, "a *mutation*" of the humanity, "a *disposition*," "an adaptation." None of these, namely, to change, to dispose, or to adapt nature is the function of existence: nor is existence "a union" "inhering" in the human nature it actuates. The point is simply that the real distinction between created essence and created existential actuation—a distinction de la Taille strove to maintain—will not permit de la Taille to confuse that which pertains to the essential order (such as changes, dispositions, and so forth) with that existence which is outside the order of essential alteration or disposition.

There is the *third* difficulty that this alleged created substantial actuation which is Christ's grace of union, is supernatural, even "at the summit of the supernatural." My article of five years ago sufficiently proves, I think, that such a conception involves a contradiction in terms.³⁶ With the general

³⁶ Mullaney, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

truth that a created substance cannot be supernatural Father Macomber seems not to quarrel; but he does vigorously deny that any such concept is involved in de la Taille's theory, on the ground that the created grace of union is not, according to de la Taille, a substance at all.

Here would seem to be the place then to consider the more limited problem whether, in fact, the theory expounded by the great French Jesuit implies that Christ's grace of union is something of the order of created substance. Expressly de la Taille says that it is neither a substance nor a part of a substance; but do the implications of his teaching sustain that conviction? I think not.

Of alleged created actuation by uncreated Act, taken generally, de la Taille says that it will be "a reception of the Act in the potency" "a perfecting of the potency" "an amelioration, a change" which change "is not nothing: it is something . . . an infused adaptation"; "it is the relation essentially inherent in the union with a reference to the term as of the union."³⁷ These descriptions apply to created actuation by uncreated Act as such; therefore to the grace of union as one such "created actuation." This grace of union in particular de la Taille, as we have seen, describes as "a disposition," "an adaptation," a union which is "inhering" in the human nature, "a mutation" and so forth. This we have seen above.

Now while the terms used are multiple they have this in common: every one of them in its proper sense designates some category of *essential* being. *Union*, for example, is in the category of relation: it is *not* existence. *Mutatio*, "change," "reception," "adaptation" in the context are all equivalent to the category of *passio*—which, again, is *not* existence but a category of essential beings. Basically, de la Taille describes his created actuation including the grace of union, as being simultaneously—1) relations of union and 2) *passiones*. Both are categories of essential, accidental created being. Existence cannot possibly be a relation of union, nor a *mutatio*, pertaining to

³⁷ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

efficient causality. Therefore, if the grace of union really is *union* at all, it must essentially be some-thing and not nothing: ³⁸ it must be *some essential reality*. It is—by de la Taille's own words—also created, substantial, and at the summit of the supernatural. It would be a created supernatural substantial reality—which, as I showed in my earlier article, is quite impossible. Father Macomber's point, borrowed from de la Taille, that it is *existential* actuation only compounds the impossibility. *Created, essential* (because predicamental) being such as *union* which is *substantial*, which is *existence*, and which is supremely *supernatural*—at least one may wonder if such a self-contradictory juxtaposition of concepts really sheds light on the divine mystery of the Incarnation.

IV

Lastly, I should like to discuss directly a point raised by Father Macomber against my paper of five years ago. It is a point too important, I think, either to omit or to imprison in a mere footnote.

I wrote: "in this very paragraph, quoted by de la Taille, Cajetan asserts the similarity between a potentiality's being perfected by assumption to divine existence and by assumption to divine personality. If, as Cajetan,—this author of de la Taille's own choice—expressly says, these two are similar; and if assumption to divine existence implies a created existential actuation, as de la Taille says it does; should not the second—assumption to divine personality—similarly require a created actuation in line of person? De la Taille concludes, as we have seen, to two existences in Christ, from the point of view of actuation. He should have concluded to two persons, also, from the point of view of actuation."³⁹

Father Macomber rejects both my conclusion and my premise; my premise on the ground that the mere fact of quoting

³⁸ Of created actuation by uncreated Act, in general, de la Taille says it "is not nothing . . . it is something," *op. cit.*, p. 30.

³⁹ Mullaney, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

from an author need not imply approval of everything said by the author in that place. This I must concede: my argument as proposed assumes too much.

But, for other reasons, I cannot concede to Father Macomber his rejection of my conclusion, namely, that de la Taille should have taught that there are in Christ two persons in the same sense that he teaches two existences in Him. That conclusion, it seems to me, lies implicit in the theory of created actuation by uncreated Act.

First, de la Taille certainly teaches that in some real sense Christ has two existences: the uncreated existence as the Word, and that created existence, or existential actuation, which is the grace of union.⁴⁰ But he also holds that the created nature that has, or possesses, created existence is a created person, for, he maintains, the questions of what created nature is a person and what is not "receive . . . satisfactory solutions drawn from one principle only: namely, the equation between created personality and ownership of created being."⁴¹ He also states that it is the nature that "possesses" being or existence, not vice versa, for he describes as a human person "the humanity (which) is possessed of an existence all its own";⁴² and again he writes, "Have that (connatural existence), I would say to the nature, and at once you are a man, you are somebody,"⁴³ that is, a person. In form, then, de la Taille teaches:

A created nature is a created person when it possesses created, proportionate existence.

But the created nature of Christ has, in some real sense, a created existence, proportionate to it.

Therefore—but who shall say it?

The major is but a regrouping of de la Taille's own words. The second premise is clear: for, according to de la Taille 1) a created, existential actuation *inheres* in the humanity of Christ:

⁴⁰ de la Taille, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 73.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

therefore Christ's humanity possesses it, 2) this possessed created existence is *proportionate* to the humanity at least in the sense that it is a "substantial *adaptation* and *conformation*" of the *humanity*; temporal, like the humanity, not eternal; created, not uncreated; defectible, not changeless. In short, there is no point to de la Taille's theory at all save to insist that every union of uncreated Act to a created potency communicates to the creature created perfection *proportionate* to that creature; the hypostatic union in particular communicates supernatural, existential created actuation.

So the conclusion seems inescapable: in the same sense that de la Taille so clearly teaches that Christ has a created existence he ought also to teach that Christ has a created personality.

Father Macomber's position that de la Taille teaches that the Word as existing possesses Christ's humanity, not the humanity an existence is not without justification; but, unfortunately for de la Taille's theory, its author also implies the reverse. Here, as elsewhere, it is the unanalyzed, but quite clear, implication of de la Taille's teaching that makes one pause, rather than what is explicitly stated.

It may be permissible for me here to add that it is no pleasure to criticize the work of a theologian like de la Taille, nor do I enjoy disagreement with Father Macomber. Criticisms of one another's work by priest-theologians has never been matter for rejoicing. Yet such criticisms are inevitable, for men normally progress in knowledge of truth only by probings that necessarily start from different viewpoints, and so, for a while, produce quite different results. But beneath the disagreement lies, please God, something of splendid value: love for God's truth such that we are willing even to disagree for a while, in our mutual hope of serving that truth. May the honesty of criticism be, *Deo adjuvante*, one indication of the love.

THOMAS U. MULLANEY, O. P.

*Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D. C.*

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

KEVIN F. O'SHEA, C. SS. R., is at present engaged in teaching Dogmatic Theology at the Redemptorist House of Studies of the Australasian Province in Ballarat, Victoria, Australia.

WILLIAM F. MACOMBER, S. J., a graduate of Harvard University and Weston College, is now engaged in Oriental Studies at the Pontifical Institute of Oriental Studies in Rome.

THOMAS U. MULLANEY, O. P., S. T. D., S. T. Prael., a graduate of the Angelicum, Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Pontifical Faculty of Theology at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D. C., is a frequent contributor to scholarly publications.

RALPH M. MCINERNEY, Ph. D., a graduate of Laval University, is a member of the Department of Philosophy at Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana.

MARY DALY, a frequent contributor to the Book Review Section, received her M. A. from Catholic University and her Ph. D. in Theology from St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, where she teaches on the Summer School Faculty. She is on the faculty of Cardinal Cushing College.

WILLIAM PAUL HAAS, O. P., S. T. L., S. T. Lr., is Professor of Sacred Theology at Emmanuel College, Boston, Mass., and lecturer at the Cardinal Cushing School of Theology.

BOOK REVIEWS

Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy. By WILLIAM BARRETT.

Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1958. Pp. 278 with Index. \$5.00.

Professor Barrett, in a book long awaited by those who profited from a reading of his post-war PARTISAN REVIEW pamphlet, *What is Existentialism?*, has chosen his subtitle if not his title well. His book is an essay *in* as well as *on* existentialism. This is not to say that it consists of independent elaborations on the recognized existential themes: its form is that of the historical essay. But as history it differs from the general run of such works because a lengthy and serious attempt is made to locate existentialism in the history of western philosophy and because Barrett's approach is one of profound sympathy and general agreement with the existential attitude. Existentialism is, he feels, the authentic philosophy of our times.

The book is divided into four parts. Part one examines the contemporary context in which existentialism appears as a new and formidable philosophical force; part two is concerned with ancient, medieval and classical modern sources and anticipations of existentialism; part three consists of chapters devoted to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre respectively; part four, one summary chapter, appears to be a correction of the title. Its concern is "Integral vs. Rational Man." Appended to the work are two short pieces, the first treating of the negative as revealing human finitude, a complement to the chapter on Heidegger. The second, "Existence and Analytic Philosophers," returns to something discussed in the text, the existential proposition.

The chapters of part one amount to a perceptive analysis of the factors of our times which have, so to speak, given rise to existentialism. The philosopher, as academic specialist, is remote "from the ordinary and concrete acts of understanding in terms of which man actually lives his day-to-day life." (p. 6) This specialization has led to a morbid preoccupation with technique and method reflecting the philosopher's feeling of guilt at not being a scientist. The reaction of American philosophers, taken as academic specialists, to the advent of existentialism after the war was, Barrett feels, symptomatic: they dismissed it as a fad, a thing of mood. Thereby they exhibited "the view that philosophic truth can be found only in those areas of experience in which human moods are not present." (p. 9) Although involving "moods," existentialism is not merely a postwar fad. We see that it is a philosophical movement which comprises Protestants, Catholics, Jews; Spaniards, Frenchmen, Germans, Russians,

etc. Barrett is plainly irked by what he takes to be the continuing rejection of existentialism on the part of American philosophers. His examination of European existentialism is intended to show that this philosophy is a response to what is most definitive of our epoch.

There has been, Barrett argues, a genuine encounter with nothingness by contemporary man. Our whole civilization, our very planet, is threatened, and our lives are without the support of religious commitment. Man's view of himself, of his society, of his science, has changed utterly: having become "problematic in his own essence," man despairs of rationalism's ideal of the state. Moreover, the foundations of the sciences, even of mathematics, have been called into question. "There is no system possible for human existence, Kierkegaard said a century ago, differing from Hegel . . . the system is impossible for mathematics, Godel tells us today." (p. 34) In a word, the bottom has dropped out of every area of human existence; the rationalist dream is repudiated: man becomes aware of his essential finitude in becoming aware of Nothing. (In an aside, Barrett attributes thomism's lack of appeal nowadays to the "radical evolvment" of the "total psychic condition of man.")

Special attention must be drawn to Barrett's remarkable third chapter: "The Testimony of Modern Art." The fine arts today reflect the disintegration of man's image of himself. The structure of the modern novel, for instance, is its lack of structure. Shakespeare could write that life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing, but the remark occurs in a play whose intelligible structure is clear. (It is perhaps an oversimplification to say, as Barrett does, "in which evil is destroyed and good triumphs.") Faulkner, on the other hand, *gives* us the meaningless sound and fury: "a world opaque, dense, irrational." The reader misses a reference to Camus' *L'homme révolté* here. If Camus had been taken into account, I think Barrett would not have said that the Greek artistic form left no room for the irrational. The *Poetics* teaches that the *mythos* which involves *tyche*, in which peripety and discovery are accomplished by chance, is the best. But, of course, the irrational in the play cannot be such for the viewer; even it must participate in the intelligible structure of the *mythos*. So too, as Camus points out, the intelligible meaning of the "absurd novel" is that life is absurd: the events have to be selected and presented in such a way that the reader understands that life has no meaning. Thus, meaninglessness is the intelligible import of such a novel. (Camus' *L'étranger*, for example, becomes doubly delightful read against the background of *Le mythe de Sisyphe* and *L'homme révolté*.) Despite the superficiality of his remark about the Greeks, Barrett's point is clear. There is today a type of art which can be said to feed on nothing—and it captures our imagination. His example is Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Why are we intrigued by such works?

Because they express what we all feel, and: "In our epoch existential philosophy has appeared as an intellectual expression of the time, and this philosophy exhibits numerous points of contact with modern art." (p. 56)

In part two, Barrett makes use of Arnold's dichotomy of Hebraism and Hellenism to find in antiquity a presentiment of existentialism. For Hebraism, the human ideal is the man of faith, the "whole man." So too existentialism's ideal man. The Hebrew ideal as involving faith, the whole man, passionate commitment, distrust of reason and the sense of sin prefigures existential man. The Greek ideal, on the other hand, is the man of reason, concerned with universals, speculatively detached, logical and innocent—all more or less pejorative in Barrett's analysis.

The treatment of the Greek ideal is a trifle facile, too patently ordered to providing historical fanfare for existentialism. It is nonsense to suggest that Aristotle thought the difficulties of human action disappeared before the sweep of pure reason. Books six and seven of the *Ethics* are surely disproof enough of that contention. Moreover, the image of the Greek as one whose sunny, untroubled countenance was forever raised to a blue, intelligible sky has long since been discarded as a scholarly fiction. (Cf. the works of Jane Harrison and the recent, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, by E. R. Dodds.)

In discussing Christian sources of existentialism, our author touches on the faith-reason problem, essence and existence, voluntarism, and concludes with a sketch of Pascal. As more immediate precursors, Swift, the English Romantic Poets (Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge), Dostoevski and Tolstoy are discussed. Chapter Five, "The Flight from Laputa," seemed to me to attain the heights of the earlier treatment of modern art.

After so much preparation (half the book), the section on the existentialists may initially disappoint. The four thinkers treated are the usual ones: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre. Too, a quick glance suggests that the treatment of them is like too many others. Nevertheless, and doubtless because of the lengthy route he has taken to these men, Barrett's analyses are not run-of-the-mill. Moreover, his obvious sympathy with existentialism is more often an aid to him than a blind spot.

The treatment of Kierkegaard is incisive and generally excellent. The *Works of Love* or *Training in Christianity* are recommended as good starting books, and the suggestion is defensible. (Perhaps the *Point of View and the Journals* before these would be best.) Allusion is made to the pseudonymous character of many Kierkegaardian works, but the significance of this is not stressed. Barrett notes correctly that it is "our ordinary human existence" that interests Kierkegaard, but it is Barrett, not Kierkegaard, who confuses this existence with that at issue in discussions of existential propositions. "If existence cannot be represented in a concept," he (i.e. Kierkegaard) says, it is not because it is too general,

remote and tenuous a thing to be conceived of, but rather it is too dense, concrete and rich. *I am*; and the fact that I exist is so compelling and enveloping a reality that it cannot be reproduced thinly in any of my mental concepts, though it is clearly the life-and-death fact without which all my concepts would be void." (p. 144) This curious *melange* of problems is peculiar to Barrett. I think it is true to say that Kierkegaard was never—except once, tangentially, actually in a footnote—concerned with existence as discussed in existential propositions. Barrett's presentation of the Kierkegaardian doctrine of the "stages" is one of the best I have read; that of subjective and objective truth not so good.

The chapter on Nietzsche succeeds in giving form and direction to his thought; the chapter is particularly well constructed in its backward reference to Kierkegaard and forward reference to Heidegger. The treatment of Heidegger, however, is disappointing. Heidegger's concern with etymology is cogently defended, and this is welcome. (Barrett sees Heidegger's concern with language as completely different from that of British philosophers; perhaps there is greater affinity than one would at first expect between Heidegger and the later Wittgenstein.) Heidegger's view of truth is wrestled with, but Barrett has difficulty trying to make it jibe with what he takes to be existential truth. His suggestion on p. 211 seems a wilful twisting of the (obvious?) meaning of Heidegger's own remarks. Barrett seems much more at ease with the Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit*, with the existential analysis of *dasein*. The remarks on the Heideggerian Being are, if possible, more obscure than those of the master. The chapter on Sartre is noteworthy for its stressing of the basic cartesianism of Sartre. The famous statement that "existence precedes essence" is discussed well (my qualifications will follow); the section on existential psychoanalysis is extremely good.

Barrett's book is an excellent one for its historical depth as well as for its provocative analyses of selected existentialists. Its value, however, does not lie in what it is about, but rather in what it is. *Irrational Man* embodies a view of philosophy that has to be reckoned with. True, it will be thought by many to be a gross simplification of the tenor of existential philosophy, but perhaps with its jargon and ponderous self-importance stripped away, existentialism is, at least in part, what Barrett takes it to be. And what is that? "In comparison with traditional philosophy, or with other contemporary schools of philosophy, Existentialism, as we have seen, seeks to bring the whole man—the concrete individual in the whole context of his everyday life, and in his total mystery and questionableness—into philosophy." (p. 244) Its central passion is for "a truth for man that is more than a truth of the intellect." (p. 222) It is precisely this notion of truth as well as those of existence and essence, however, which seem most confused in this book—and in several existentialists—particularly when more traditional meanings of these terms are referred to. Sartre's rejection

of an essence of man which would precede existence can only be understood in terms of a Leibnitzian essence which would contain my history and destroy freedom. The essence with which Sartre is concerned is really man's moral whatness, and this is indeed a result of existence, i. e. of free choices. The discussion on pp. 89-97 indicates the confusion that has crept into Barrett's thinking—as well as the responsibility some thomists bear for confusion with respect to essence and existence. (This weakness of Barrett's book is also present in Wild's *Challenge of Existentialism*.) Gilson's *Being and Some Philosophers* is, Barrett feels, a great book. That it is an influential one is clear from these pages. Barrett takes existence (in the thomistic sense of *actus essendi*) to be the history of our actions, what makes us to be the kind of person we are. Gilson, of course, had earlier reduced all differences between this man and that to *esse*. (Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 186) Whether he realizes it or not, it is not *esse substantiale* which concerns Barrett; if essence in its primary sense were what concerned him, he could take comfort in the adage: *homo non est humanitas*. But he is not interested in essence so considered. It is quite true that what is accidental to "humanity" is of the essence of my moral character. The here and now in which I must make the choices which will contribute to my moral whatness are not accidental to those choices: as *circumstantiae* they in their fashion define my choices and consequent character. If I ask *what* Socrates is, the answer given will not decide what Socrates is to do here and now. Neither his essence nor his *esse substantiale* have immediate relevance for his prudential choices. There is little point in berating Barrett for his remarks concerning scholastic thought, however; his source is Gilson. To Barrett's credit, he rejects the attempt to use St. Thomas' distinction of essence and existence in the area which concerns existentialism. The distinction, he notes, is "too abstract and schematic. The medieval conceptions of essence and existence do not do justice to the full concreteness of modern experience, particularly to our experience of man himself." (p. 97) Which translated means, I think, that they do not have immediate practical relevance—and that is forever true.

It would be difficult to document the view that it is the practical impact of philosophy which constitutes Barrett's chief interest. Nevertheless, at crucial points in his book, it seems clear that his predilection for existentialism is founded in the belief that it is a philosophy which assesses our present predicament, the plight of western civilization; that it promises us the hint of a way out of our difficulties. It does this by depriving us of any rationalistic optimism, as if all we had to do is think things out clearly and distinctly. This, I think, explains Barrett's plea for a truth which is more than correctness of thought. Is it not the case that the truth of the whole man, that which engages appetite as well, is prudential truth, practical truth, the truth which is moral goodness? What else is "being authentic" than being as one ought to be? Barrett sees existentialism as a

peculiarly forceful reminder that man is contingent, that action requires more than thought, that the passion and obscurity of faith define us when we act. To deny all this is to be guilty of what Sartre calls *mauvaise foi*, self-deception. It is a major achievement of his book that Barrett has seized upon this facet of the existential philosophies. However, this interpretation of existentialism leads to great difficulties.

To see existentialism as concern for the whole man, as the search for a truth which will engage more than intellect, perhaps even as a hortatory endeavor to lead men to choose the good rather than talk about it—this demands greater continuity with Kierkegaard on the part of later existentialists than seems to be there. The case of Heidegger is particularly difficult; perhaps we must take seriously his disavowal of existentialism. As have so many others, Barrett dismisses the denial. But if there is no continuity—or precious little—with Kierkegaard, particularly with regard to the meaning of “existential thought,” something extremely odd happens. For Kierkegaard, the order of existence (the arena of action, choice) is separate from philosophy. A philosophical discussion of existence (choice) is forever different from choosing. The truth of philosophy is one thing; existential truth is another. Nowadays, however, and Barrett is the case in point, we find a demand that philosophy itself strive to attain the truth which is more than a truth of intellect. This is what Jaspers asks; this is what Barrett asks. It is the reverse of the error Kierkegaard attacked. Hegel, Kierkegaard thought, made action simply something of thought, as if, we might say, knowledge were virtue. The current tendency is not to reduce action to thought, but to reduce philosophy to action, to demand of it the truth of action. Thus, in the section on Pascal, Barrett writes, “In any case, God as the *object* of a rigorous demonstration, even supposing such a demonstration were forthcoming, would have nothing to do with the living needs of religion.” (p. 102) What is important here is not Barrett’s doubt that a valid metaphysical proof of God’s existence can be given; rather it is his impatience with such activity. What *difference* does such a proof make? That is, what does it mean for me here and now, faced with these unique tasks? With St. Thomas, we must admit that it can have only an accidental relevance for prudential decisions. Philosophy, even practical philosophy, will never settle the existential difficulties Barrett has in mind.

If one accepts Barrett’s view of existentialism, it becomes a philosophy which has set itself an impossible task. Looked upon as followers of Kierkegaard, later existentialists would then appear to have done what the Danish thinker said Cratylus did with respect to Heraclitus: taken the step beyond the master which destroys the master’s teaching.

RALPH M. McINERNEY

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

Resurrection and Historical Reason: A Study of Theological Method. By RICHARD R. NIEBUHR. New York: Scribner's, 1957. Pp. 184. \$3.95.

Professor Niebuhr states in his Preface that "this book represents an attempt to understand the connection between the biblical proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the order of theological thought." He expresses the fundamental conviction that Christ and the Resurrection are inseparable. Despite the fact that there is a tension between Christ as the object of historical consciousness, and that consciousness itself, the common Protestant dichotomy of "Jesus of history—Christ of Faith" does nothing to solve the problems connected with the Resurrection. On the contrary, Niebuhr contends, it succeeds only in dissolving Christ Himself as Well as the Church.

The first of the six chapters of the book is an acute analysis of attempts of the modern Protestant mind to cope with the Resurrection, a doctrine which was central to the faith of the early church, but which has been moved to the periphery of Protestant teaching. The reason for the change is that "the primitive resurrection faith conflicts disastrously with modern canons of historicity." (p. 1) The history of recent Protestant theology, Niebuhr points out, can be read "as a series of attempts to halt the conflict between the insistent canons of historical criticism and the unquenchable resurrection tradition." (p. 2) The study of these modern attempts, which fail insofar as they seek to reduce the Resurrection faith to the dimensions specified by preconceived philosophy of history or by psychology, illuminates the nature of historical thought. Oddly enough, as Niebuhr points out, there cannot be a final victory of historical reason in its conflict with more or less "Biblical" faith, for such a victory, by destroying the orthodox recollection upon which criticism feeds, would be destructive of criticism itself.

Strauss, Hermann, Harnack, and Schweitzer, who "did much to create the mold of all subsequent theology that has taken seriously the problem of the historical character of the New Testament" (p. 12), are first analyzed. For Strauss, the assumption of all historical criticism is that the "absolute cause" never intervenes by single arbitrary acts in the chain of secondary causes. Hence the *a priori* impossibility of the apostolic encounters with the risen Jesus. Philosophical reason compensates for the deprivation by perceiving a "larger kind of resurrection," enacted in the drama of absolute spirit. Hermann, like Strauss, upholds the inviolability of nature, and for Harnack, "religion must transcend nature because nature is the realm of death." (p. 10) Schweitzer differs in that he fails to compensate for his criticism with a philosophy of transcendent spirit, but rather leaves us with a Jesus who has revealed Himself in death to be no more than a man. The significance of these typical theologians, we are

told, is that, united in their loyalty to the canons of nineteenth century criticism, they face the resurrection as an insoluble problem. Such assumptions have driven many thinkers (e.g. William Adams Brown and John Baillie) to the double truth theory in various forms, more or less subtle. An oddity common to all of them is the attempt to substitute the crucifixion for the resurrection as the focus of faith and surreptitiously invest it with the significance of the resurrection.

The regrettable consequences of the disintegration of the New Testament pattern is reflected in Renan's *Life of Jesus*, wherein the Biblical account is seen as a sort of Aramaic copy of the *Crito*. Deterioration into sentimentality is inevitable in such a work, for an adequate *ratio cognoscendi* has been made impossible by ignoring the resurrection tradition. Not all Protestant thinkers, however, have made the resurrection peripheral. There is a "metaphysical" approach, represented by Lionel Thornton, for whom the risen body of Christ is the Church. The fallacy of such an approach, Niebuhr succinctly states, is that we do not have the option of thinking either historically or metaphysically, but we have only the option of thinking historically about historical events, or historically about the metaphysical implications of such events. By the "metaphysical" approach the Jesus of history is dissolved. Other recent thinkers have attempted to come to grips with the nature of historical fact as both questionable in a sense and yet admitting of positive Christian interpretation. For Emil Brunner, Niebuhr says, confidence in the death of Christ "for me" does not alter the description of His death as "probable" by historical science.

A final point made in this chapter regards the apostolic encounters with the risen Christ, which have so generally been explained away. Niebuhr strikes at the heart of this matter when he remarks that "the witness of the primitive community as a whole was called forth by the particular testimony of the Apostles." (p. 29) Thus we do not gain the right to declare ourselves free of apostolic witness. Psychologizing the apostolic encounters with the risen Lord is a denial of the content of the faith of the early Church; and it is precisely this faith which the psychologizers hold to be normative.

The second chapter considers "Resurrection and Historical Method." The influence of Kant upon Protestant theology is here illustrated in the case of Albert Ritschl, who, in adopting Kant's distinction between theoretical and practical reason, changes what was simply a distinction to an irrevocable divorce. The result of Ritschl's bad Kantianism, Professor Niebuhr claims, is a denial of a positive value to the created order at the level of nature. How does this affect his Christology? Briefly, the transcendence won by Jesus over the world is not in any sense a re-creation of the natural order. His victory does not consist in resurrection from the

dead, but in patience in suffering. Not unlike some of his contemporaries, Ritschl moves on two levels simultaneously. As a biblical theologian he cannot label the resurrection as a mere myth, but as a systematic theologian he cannot think of it as being of any consequence. Thus, "the resurrection itself shrinks to a meaningless miracle in a world so rigidly stratified into discrete levels of nature and spirit." (p. 41)

In a sense, the opposite extreme of Ritschl's position is to be found in Karl Barth's *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*. For Barth, theology must speak about the concrete, about history, and abjure Ritschl's "things in general." Historical reality, however, means the total historical import of an event. The historical import of Jesus thus understood achieves its greatest intensity in the passion, crucifixion, and resurrection. The resurrection event, moreover, is the supreme moment of revelation. Niebuhr, as in the other instances, penetrates to the essential weakness of the theory. The "historically real" has been purchased at the price of ignoring historical fact. The constant epistemological attitude demanded of the Christian, according to Barth, is wholly passive; the acting subject is Jesus Christ, the encountered Lord. Problems of theological method become inconsequential in this personal encounter. As Niebuhr expresses it: "In actuality Barth's realism must enlist a subjective idealism, in which the sole acting subject is Jesus Christ." (p. 49)

Bultmann, who next comes under scrutiny, is said to conceive the task of theology to be the utterance of a genuinely existential understanding of man's lot in the twentieth century. Theology for him is to be implemented by existential philosophy, specifically that of Martin Heidegger. The extreme subjectivity which results in the restriction of meaning to statements derived from a phenomenological analysis of the inner self is described by Niebuhr: "Under this treatment, the historical Jesus emerges as the Socratic teacher whose essential role is that of mid-wife to our recognition of internal reality." (p. 58) Like Ritschl, Bultmann completely separates theoretical from practical reason and the double truth theory is again operative. Since Bultmann accepts the idea of nature as a closed system, he "reconciles" theology with natural science by translating the resurrection into the "wonder of faith."

Finally, the approach of John Knox becomes the focus of attention. For Knox, the historical Jesus is the Christ of faith. The criterion for this judgment is the remembering church, which recalls Jesus in this manner. He is criticized by Niebuhr for his "partial failure to establish the independent reality of the historical Christ." (p. 69)

The conclusion drawn at the end of this chapter, based upon the analysis of the three representative thinkers of Protestantism, Barth, Bultmann, and Knox, is that it is impossible to reach an independent theological method without broaching the fundamental question about the

conditions of our knowledge of historical events. The lesson of this examination, Niebuhr says, is that an independent theological method can be achieved only "through a willingness to face the problems of how the Christian community knows its own history, and how it can constructively criticize its own knowledge." (p. 71)

The third chapter examines the question of "The Possibility of an Historical Reason." Professor Niebuhr develops in the first section the thesis that Protestant theology tends to approach the problem of historical knowledge almost exclusively on the basis of presuppositions ultimately derived from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. Kant, he maintains, by his dichotomy of theoretical reason and practical reason "enabled a Protestantism imbued with the spirit of rationalism and respect for the canons of natural science to find a positive gospel once more in the New Testament." (p. 76) This Kantianism among Protestant theologians, which still persists today, is understandable, for it enables them to escape from the intellectual hegemony of natural science without rejecting its validity. As Niebuhr points out, however, the reconciliation of the method of natural science with metaphysical theology is not the whole problem. There remains the question of the significance of history, and here there is a real disparity between the demands of biblical history and Kantianism. The former demands that the individual event or person be considered for its own sake, whereas for Kant the historically given individual is meaningful only in relationship to some independently grounded norm or by virtue of his membership in a class. Often the solution of the Protestant theologians has been to relegate biblical history to the realm of the non-cognitive "practical reason." This solution is illustrated very well in the case of Bultmann's works, in which *Heilsgeschichte* is considered as belonging to a different order of knowledge from *Historie*. The "sacred event," e.g. the resurrection, is independent of temporal history. Niebuhr thinks this procedure highly unsatisfactory, for then "the faculty for the apprehension of sacred history can deal only with timeless, static ideals utterly remote from the concrete experience in which the historically conditioned subject is able to participate." (p. 87)

Having amply illustrated his thesis that biblical history should not be understood within the framework of natural science or of idealistic metaphysics, Professor Niebuhr asks what is really meant in theology by the *historicity* of an event. In attempting to grasp the distinctive character of the material with which historical interpretation deals, he repeatedly emphasizes his belief that there is no "neutral pastness," that is, that there cannot be such an entity as the past in general. Events that have transpired become part of the past only insofar as they become the past for some mind or group of minds, "only insofar as they become actually appropriated by our historical selves." (p. 93) Thus the resurrection tra-

dition would not belong to any past at all if it were not known by the church. Two things follow from this notion of historical reason: (1) the Christian community is indispensable for knowledge of all that pertains to Jesus of Nazareth, including, obviously, the resurrection; (2) the mode of historical cognition is *remembering*, which cannot belong to a neutral observer, but only to one who has "internalized" the past event. There is, however, a danger which Niebuhr perceives in the idea of a communal memory. It might become "a collective consciousness that is itself the creative source of the content of the particular memories of its members." (p. 99) The corrective for this danger will be found, however, in the science of criticism, which presupposes that the Christian church is not merely a supra-personal consciousness, but a community of selves interacting upon one another. The aim of criticism should be to uncover the many different layers of interpretation upon which the biblical authors have drawn.

The foregoing sketch of historical reason is not claimed as original by Professor Niebuhr. Rather, he says that it is based upon ideas of which Protestant biblical theology has been making use—but not systematically and selfconsciously. The explication of these principles of historical reason has been impeded by the ideas of nature which theology has uncritically borrowed from philosophy and the natural sciences, and the resultant "Conflict of History and Nature" is the subject of the entire fourth chapter.

The first idea of nature imbedded in the Protestant mind is that of a "static arena or causal network in the midst of which history takes place and by which historical possibilities are strictly defined." (p. 105) This requires the discovery of a wholly transcendental kind of history, as a home for the miracles that have been exiled from mundane history. A second and equally pernicious notion of nature belongs to the familiar dualism of spirit and matter, formulated in modern times by Descartes. This forces an artificial distinction between man's "natural and spiritual existence and forces us to confine our religious interests entirely to the latter." (p. 108) So it happens that the *Heilsgeschichte*-theologian can speak of the "objective fact" of the resurrection as being obscure, but discounts this as irrelevant, since the "meaning" of the resurrection is clear. Niebuhr rejects such ambivalence on the basis that "all human knowledge is dependent upon the subject-object situation and requires in its constitution both an element of immediate experience and an element of subjectivity." (p. 114)

If one's concept of history is so profoundly affected by his ideas about nature as all this would seem to indicate, it is equally apparent, the author points out in the concluding section of the fourth chapter, that there is a "historicizing of nature." The scientist's knowledge of the so-called

objective world is based upon assumptions which are subject to gradual re-modifications. Thus it happens that "the mind is always confronted by nature in a social, historical context, and consequently the nature that we know is never a pure nature, but a socialized, historically conditioned nature." (p. 123) The relevance for "historical reason" of a realization of all this lies in the fact that it liberates the biblical historian from the obligation of desperately resorting to a concept of "sacred history" (i. e., non-factual, non-cognitive historical knowledge) in order to find a place for phenomena which appear to conflict with the "absolute laws" of nature. The author summarizes the effect which this outlook upon nature is supposed to have upon theology: "Biblical theology, however, need not limit itself to the alternatives of an empty transcendental history or a history rigidly defined by the immutable laws of nature, if it can see that nature also shares in the historicity of the self and is indispensable to it." (p. 126)

In the fifth chapter, the author is concerned with "The Power of the Past." The explicitly stated presupposition of this chapter is that the relation between Jesus Christ and history "is best approached through an analysis of the present situation of the people for whom the resurrection most directly bears on history: the people who, to use John Knox's words, together remember Jesus." (p. 129) Niebuhr maintains in this chapter that the church has always been intensely critical of its own interpretations of historical events, but that this is especially characteristic of the church today. Although there is a temptation to engage in a "reductionist research," which "treats the past as though it could be introduced into a laboratory where all the attending conditions have been carefully defined and refined in advance" (p. 141), this approach is unsatisfactory. The past is given to us, but not on our terms. It is problematic, because it has a vitality of its own. Niebuhr maintains that the interaction of past and present demands a continual re-creation of the historical Jesus Christ. The relevance of the past to the present is elicited by the new situations into which the Church is thrust.

In the final section of this chapter, Niebuhr puts biblical criticism into a broader context, claiming that it is merely the most recent phase of the Church's criticism of itself. Indeed, "it can be identified as the contemporary counterpart of the Reformation of the church that culminated in the sixteenth century." (p. 149) In both cases, it is claimed, self-criticism and historical criticism are inseparable, and in both instances the impetus came from the whole society of Christendom. It is interesting that the author sees the resurrection as central to the Church's self-criticism. In that phase of self-criticism which was the Reformation, for example, the Reformers are said to have selected the doctrine of justification by faith as the chief formulation of the gospel, and "the moment of history behind

the doctrine of justification is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." (p. 151) Again today, Niebuhr maintains, the church is being forced to re-appraise its past, particularly the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Any attempt to give the church status independently of its origin in the resurrection must fail. There is no law of nature or of history that can account for the resurrection, which is the basis of the existence of the church, although the proponents of *Heilsgeschichte* or of psychological explanations of the fact seek to find one. The conflict today, in fact, can be seen as between the interpretation of Christendom's history in terms of law or resurrection. The latter, the author asserts, may be used as an analogy or interpretative key, but "cannot be converted into a generalization; it remains a single and arbitrary and wholly spontaneous event." (p. 155) Yet it is an unrecorded event, for although the New Testament cites witnesses to the post-resurrection appearances, it cites none who was a witness to the rising itself. "The appearances of Christ as risen are the points at which the resurrection touches the memory of the church." (p. 161) Thus the center of the "total event" can only be inferred from the circumference.

The final chapter is concerned with "History, Resurrection, and Law." The author first distinguishes "nature" from the capitalized form, "Nature." "Nature" stands for the system of law by which we interpret and organize the events of our environment, whereas "nature" stands for the peculiar mode and existence which characterizes any individual. It is confidence in the interpretation of history by the idea of Nature which makes the event of Jesus' resurrection seem unacceptable, although there is no necessary conflict with "nature" as the term is used here. Overconfidence in Nature, however, is unwarranted, when two of its predominant features are examined. First, all laws of Nature are highly abstract, "because they have to do only with aspects of total events, but never with the totality of a single event." (p. 166) We cannot look to laws, therefore, to explain specific individual events. A second feature of these laws of Nature is their historical genesis; in fact, their historical character—"the human factor"—makes it necessary eventually to revise them. Thus, "these laws do not represent a vision of the ultimate structure of being, but rather arise out of our daily intercourse with the environment." (p. 169) If made the key of history, they deprive it of its constituent spontaneity.

What then is the clue to an understanding of history? "Such a clue will be forthcoming only insofar as we interpret the particular events of history for their own sake, and in their own light." (p. 171) The resurrection of Jesus Christ shares in the arbitrariness and independence which characterize all events to some degree. Yet, insofar as it is not the logical implicate of any other event or events, it is unlike any other. "It

runs directly counter to our contemporary understanding of history, because it represents the unfathomable and irrational power of history itself. In the resurrection of Christ the spontaneity, particularity, and independence of historical events rise to the surface in a single eruption." (p. 177)

A question which may well have been plaguing the reader throughout is, of course, whether Professor Niebuhr thinks the resurrection is a miracle, or not. He answers the question at the very end of the last chapter, but not unexpectedly it is a qualified and ambiguous answer. He says that it is a mistake "in one sense" to treat the resurrection as a miracle, or as a problem deserving to be discussed in terms of miracle in general, because this implies a negative relationship to nature. "But the Resurrection of Christ does not violate Nature, but only death. It epitomizes the original creativity that informs all history and underlies every conception of Nature." (p. 177)

This book is one well worth the careful attention of Catholic readers. The acuteness of the author's analysis of the modern Protestant mind would perhaps be difficult for a Catholic theologian to match, for Professor Niebuhr approaches nineteenth century and contemporary Protestant thinkers with a kind of "empathy" of one who shares their intellectual problems, and with the insight of one whose acceptance or rejection of ideas is part of a personal intellectual quest. The Catholic reader, in his attempt to understand a Barth or a Schweitzer, for example, may lack this kind of insight if he approaches such authors with the conscious or unconscious attitudes of a heresy-hunting apologist.

Niebuhr's emphasis upon the importance of the role of the "remembering church" in the interpretation of the Biblical account might, with a superficial reading, sound somewhat like an argument in favor of the role of tradition as rule of faith. Such an interpretation would be mistaken, for he expressly states (p. 136) that the notion of infallible tradition, like the Hegelian logic of history or the rules of psychology is merely a device "bent toward the end of reducing the past to an absolute certainty of the present." Despite his rejection of the Kantian-born dualism of other Protestant theologians, Niebuhr's logic in his own positive theory does not generate a very certain sort of certainty; he seems, in fact, to have evolved a species of dualism of his own. One gets a clue to this in his comparison of biblical criticism to the Reformation, both of which are seen to be phases of the Christian community's self-criticism. In both cases the new circumstances in which the church found itself forced it to re-appraise its interpretation of its origins. For Niebuhr, the very vitality of the Church seems to consist in a tension between past and present, which results in a continual re-creation of the past, in fact, as he himself tells us, there is a "continual re-creation of the historical Jesus Christ." (p. 143) The past-present dualism is expressed in other dimensions, as

when, for example, Niebuhr speaks of the tension between subject and object in historical knowledge. In a certain sense, of course, all of this is true. It is quite clear, however, that Niebuhr is not merely stating that each generation must appropriate the knowledge of the past to itself, nor is he merely saying that theological knowledge continually becomes more explicit when the insights of each new generation are brought to bear upon revelation, and when theological conflicts stimulate the development of dogma. With all of this one might readily agree. According to Niebuhr, however, not only is the principle of selectivity present in the knowledge of the church, but there is also "refraction and distortion" present.

For Niebuhr, then, the conditions of human knowledge are always there, "belying any claim the church may advance to an absolutely comprehensive and indisputable knowledge of the gospel history." (p. 142) As is painfully obvious in this statement, the author has a way of qualifying many statements to such an extent that it is impossible to either fully accept or reject his assertions. One might be inclined to agree that the church does not have comprehensive knowledge, but the indisputability of the knowledge which it does possess is another matter. If the import of the statement quoted above is clouded by its ambivalence, however, the effects of Niebuhr's brand of dualism are quite clear in the following sentence: "The useful notion of a normative tradition associated with apostolic sees was, for instance, perverted into the principle that whatever had found its way into approved doctrine must be rooted in the actual history of Jesus and his disciples." (p. 136) The church, we are told, was guilty of trying to find an *a priori* certainty about the past. (p. 136)

Finally, at the risk of being obvious, it may be pointed out that the terms which are most crucial for an understanding of Niebuhr's positive theory are seldom defined. The use of the term "miracle" is a case in point. We are told that it is a mistake "in one sense" to treat the resurrection as a miracle, because this would imply a negative relationship to Nature. It never becomes clear what is meant by a "negative relationship," but one soon discovers that "the miraculous quality of the resurrection cannot be effaced, for it is an event that cannot be assimilated to the image of death." (p. 178) It "stands outside the compass of all law" and is "contradicted by the experience of dying." (p. 178) Although the author's criticisms of his contemporaries are quite precise, an attempt to understand his own thought is indeed a challenge to the resourcefulness of the reader. The alternatives are clear: One may either try to match Professor Niebuhr's terms against the meanings which he brings with him to a reading of the book, or one may use the invisible antennae of the invertebrate reader to seek out the intent behind qualifications of qualifications.

MARY F. DALY

Cardinal Cushing College
Brookline, Massachusetts

The Conflict with Rome. By GERRITT C. BERKOUWER. Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1957. Pp. 319. \$5.95.

The Reformation is a process, an unending one which leads either back to Rome or further away from even its own starting point. For this reason any record or commentary on the relationships between Protestantism and Catholicism is bound to have a certain incompleteness about it. Dr. Berkouwer's discussion of the areas of conflict with Rome, offered with the authority of a recognized theologian, has this natural limitation also, but he is objective and thorough enough to acknowledge it. His thesis seems to hinge on this precise fact of growing opposition on the one hand and growing affinity on the other, not so much in social and political activity, but in the understanding of the fundamental principles of Christianity. *The Conflict with Rome* shows the Catholic and Protestant theologian just what has happened to the original issues of protest.

This work has many merits, not the least of which is its sober and charitable consideration of every subject discussed, but then what else is expected. Moreover, the author does not hesitate to call a conflict a conflict: there is no artificial attempt to resolve all differences, but rather an honest, if sometimes incomplete, presentation of those differences which he considers to be worthy of conflict, at least theological. Dr. Berkouwer understands well the consistent refusal of the Catholic Church to compromise her teaching for the sake of a broader Christian unity which would be proportionately less Christian as it became more compromised. He sees the differences as more than different views of the same basic truths, but as "different religions" radically opposed on all fundamentals.

When it comes to the actual analysis of the conflict with Rome on such fundamental issues as the authority of the Church, grace, predestination, the communion of saints, the Incarnation and the sacraments there is much to be criticized both positively and negatively. Before undertaking such brief observations as are here warranted, this much must be acknowledged. Berkouwer is obviously interested in delineating the fundamental points of dispute: he does not attempt an extensive exposition of the doctrines of both sides with their own exhaustive defenses. He chooses, as he naturally must, what he understands to be the critical issues, exposes them in their own authoritative texts and shows the opposition. Granted, it would be impossible to admit every argument and rebuttal, yet Berkouwer does fail to represent many of the fundamental principles of Catholicism which would color the exact points of difficulty. This defect most likely comes from his more constant interpretation of the teaching of the Church in the context of its own condemnation or opposition to the Reformation. This is not sufficient.

When the Church condemned the Reformation, it did not condemn those truths which the Reformers retained. When the Church did not explicitly recognize such truths as the value of the individual's conscience, the absolute necessity of Faith (as fundamental to) justification, the place of Scripture as a source of divine personal communication, as they were proposed by the reformers, she was not minimizing their importance. She already possessed them in the unity of the Faith and preserved them in the proper context. Because this is true of the Church's view of her own mission, though the Protestant, consistent with his own principles, would not concede this, one must understand the teaching of the Church universally. For example, the history of doctrinal disputes within the Church, valuable as it is, does not reveal the depth of the Faith with its proper order and balance. Not even Denzinger's "Enchiridion Symbolorum," studied from cover to cover, would yield a comprehensive picture of the Faith especially its intrinsic harmony. The most revered ecclesiastical writers, however approved by the Church, have their limitations. Hence the Church must be judged by her whole teaching mission, using Scripture to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, to entreat and to rebuke in all patience and doctrine, as St. Paul encouraged Timothy to do.

The presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, not as in an institution, but in the souls of the justified is a matter which Dr. Berkouwer considers critical, and rightly so. Perhaps it is more the fault of Catholic apologetes than his own that the full extent of the teaching of the Church here is not more clearly (though not necessarily more extensively) presented. The Catholic who submits to the authority of the Holy Spirit speaking through popes and councils is moved by that same Sanctifying Spirit to freely accept such authority and to find his personal salvation in the consoling direction of that same Spirit. The individual's experience of the saving grace of Christ is not sacrificed to an institution, nor is it strictly speaking subordinated to it, rather it is found in union with that sacramentally constituted institution. The institutional structure and authority originate within the sacramental system which was instituted personally by Christ for the sanctification of the individuals who would freely avail themselves of that personal communion wherein the "promise of the leading of the Holy Ghost" begins to be fulfilled. *Sacramenta sunt propter homines*, and everything else in the organization of Church is for the sacraments. It is unfortunately true, however, that some individual Catholics are more enthusiastic about their identification with the organization of the Church than with participating in its life of grace; and this is what misleads non-Catholics.

It would be helpful for Protestant theologians in their justifiable concern over the individual's critical acceptance of the promise of Christ if, after

analysing the dogmatic teachings of the Church on the Incarnation, grace and Hope, they would relate them to the theology of Faith and Charity and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, remembering that what is separately defined and defended by the Church is not necessarily separately experienced by the individual Catholic in love with his Savior. Never is the Faith as the object of belief preserved in the teaching of the Church to be confused with or substituted for the supernatural gift of personal insight into the veracity of divine revelation. Similarly, it is disastrous to confuse the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church preserving it from misrepresenting the Gospel with the individual's certain expectancy of the fulfillment of the promises of the Gospel tempered by the Gift of Fear. A consideration of St. Thomas' remarkably simple explanation of the correspondence of Hope and Fear would have thrown some light on the chapter, *The Problem of the Assurance of Salvation*. Though men must work out their salvation in fear and trembling, they ought not fall into the anguished state of blind desperation bequeathed to them by Kierkegaard. The object of fear is man's own vacillating will, whereas the object of Hope is the omnipotent and merciful God who can make man as "perfect" as Himself. If Berkouwer understood this, he would not have said with Rückert that the discussions at Trent were "an unbalanced striving between distrust and trust, between a torturing anxiety of conscience and religious enthusiasm, between fear and hope."

Considerably more insight was shown in Berkouwer's discussion of the teaching of the Church on the Incarnation and Christ's sacramental presence in the Church. He points to an area of agreement between Catholics and Anglicans in their understanding that the whole of the created order is affected by the Incarnation especially through the sacraments which draw the material world into the divine plan of salvation and are used by God to effect the presence of Christ in the just. This is spoken of as a "progressive incarnation." Berkouwer reverses the charge against the Reformers that they have limited the importance of the Incarnation to Christ Himself and His salvific sacrifice and insists that actually the Reformers have preserved the true universality of the redemptive Incarnation by insisting that all was accomplished and merited in Christ. The differences are clearly delineated, but one fact is overlooked. The problem is not ultimately to determine which understanding of the enduring effect of the Incarnation gives proper emphasis to the supremacy of Christ in the Church. No sensible Christian is going to deny that anyway. The problem is, more exactly, how did God will to effect the presence of the Incarnate Word among us. If He willed to do it through the material symbolism of the sacraments, then His grace must be accepted on those terms regardless of the "ontological" complications, possible abuses by

men, and the restriction of individual freedom that may follow. Here the Catholic reverses the charge of the Reformers that the synthesis of the Incarnation with sacramental grace has limited the freedom and pre-eminence of Christ.

It follows quite naturally that Dr. Berkouwer should have to consider the place of Mary in the economy of salvation as a related issue. The growing interest in Mariology among Catholic theologians is drawing the attention of Protestants to the real importance of Mary as a key to the redemptive Incarnation. As elsewhere, Berkouwer is careful to separate the teaching of the Church from the sometimes untheological statements of Catholics about Our Lady. It is to be remembered that the Reformers, including Luther, treated the subject of Mary with great reverence, recognizing her as most blessed among women. But they feel that her position has been greatly overextended, especially with any suggestion that Mary merited salvation for the Church in any unique way. This follows from the natural difficulty that Protestants have in admitting any element that seems to limit the unique position of Christ. However, they all seem well aware that Mary's vocation, as it appears in the Bible, was to dedicate herself consciously to the saving mission of her Son, for which they honor her. Strangely, Mary has become a symbol to the Protestant theologian of all that is dangerous in Catholicism, which confirms the Catholic's devotion to her as a symbol of all that is distinctly Catholic.

The original position of the Reformers with regard to the effect, or rather, lack of effect, of justification is reappraised by Dr. Berkouwer as another critical issue, and so it is. He shows some concern for the ontological compulsion of Rome to assert little supernatural realities wherever there is need for an explanation not found in Scripture. Contrasted with this is the absolute simplicity of the Biblical theory of the Protestants who see the economy of Salvation as a merciful promise of a transcendent God through the merits of Christ alone. The Protestant rejection of the introduction of Logic and Metaphysics into theology is itself well founded in Luther's hatred for human reason and its product, Philosophy. If anything will be clear to the Catholic theologian who reads this book it will be the futility of appealing to the discipline of clear definitions and distinctions and logical reasoning. Berkouwer does not acknowledge that Catholics are as much aware of the limitations of logic as he is: far from trying to impose a logical necessity on God's actions, the Scholastics use logic to see the wisdom of what God has already done and to isolate the very aspects of God's activity which transcend logic. Still, the Reformation theologian sees all this as unscriptural, complicating and obscuring the true meaning of Christ as each individual's personal redeemer.

Dr. Berkouwer traces this attitude back to a rejection of all metaphysical

speculation together with the notion of the analogy of being. The rejection of any real effect in the supernatural order, as well as the idea that God can only be discovered by the individual in the confrontation with his own existence is nothing more than nominalism. Hence, the affinity between Protestantism and Existentialism. That this attitude is still important to thinking Protestants is made quite clear in Berkouwer's reference to Karl Barth's vehement rejection of all possible ontological entanglements between nature and supernature. He quotes Barth thus: "I consider the *analogia entis* to be the invention of the anti-Christ, which makes it impossible for us to become Roman Catholics." By way of explanation, Berkouwer observes: "Barth opposes the *analogia entis* because it implies the indestructible continuity between God and man constituting the foundation of grace." The Thomistic concept of the obediential potency in nature is of little help to Barth and Berkouwer, who see it as mere verbiage. But then some Catholic theologians have obscured the real meaning of the obediential potency by making it as actual as it is really potential, hence the confusion.

It is not surprising, then, that the existence of sanctifying grace, sufficient and efficacious actual grace and meritorious human activity are still sources of conflict. Berkouwer assumes that all the unscriptural wrangling between Thomists and Molinists led Pope Paul V to terminate the controversy *de auxiliis*, thus revealing his hand. This "indecision of doctrinal authority" he takes to be clear evidence of the lack of a comprehensible Roman doctrine on the power of God working on the believer by Faith alone. Here and in the discussion on merit, Berkouwer shows lamentable indifference to the doctrine that God no more loses His transcendent freedom and goodness by incorporating man into the process of meriting his own reward than He did by creating man to His own image in the first place. Would that the Reformers could see the greater mercy of God in accepting man into the scheme of salvation of course totally merited by Christ, *cooperation and all!* If it seems that this makes the redemption all too human, it should be remembered who was being redeemed. At stake here is the radical concept of secondary causality, which Berkouwer considers to be a fundamental issue, but he does not consider it adequately. This is most likely because of his natural distaste for philosophical speculation.

One characteristic of this work which will dissatisfy the Catholic theologian is that much of the debate is carried on with sources that do not enjoy primary authority in Catholic theology. This is not meant as an insult to Cardinal Newman, Karl Adam or Dr. de Vogel and others whom Berkouwer quotes with greater frequency and familiarity than he does St. Thomas, Suarez, Bellarmine or Cajetan. Such a remark would be expected from a Thomist, would it not? The issue is simply that there is danger,

to which Berkouwer falls victim, that one would confuse the personal discoveries and directions of converts to the Church with the Church's own apologetics and theology. For example, one should not confuse de Vogel's understanding and dependence upon the consistency of Catholic doctrine with that of the ancient Church with the true nature of Apostolic authority and Apostolic tradition which antedate the New Testament and the commentaries of the earliest Fathers.

The Conflict with Rome will be of greater value to Catholic readers than it will be to non-Catholics who look for a comprehensive view of the Roman difference, for this reason, that the Catholic will see in the very defects of the picture of Rome a true picture of what modern, well-informed Protestant theologians understand of Rome, whereas the non-Catholic will be only partially enlightened about the true nature in Catholicism, but will be confirmed in many of his abiding suspicions.

WILLIAM PAUL HAAS, O. P.

*Dominican House of Philosophy,
Dover, Mass.*

BRIEF NOTICES

Psychology—The Study of Man's Normal Mental Life. By FRs. CHARLES P. BRUEHL and WILLIAM E. CAMPBELL. Villanova, Pa.: Villanova Press, 1957. Pp. 384 with index. \$5.50.

The science of psychology seems to be, at the present time, in the difficult but not unenviable position of an enormously rich man who would like to take an accounting of his holdings. Decades of laboratory research, masses of clinical reports, the results of widespread application to practical purposes, the revelations of psychoanalysis and the cogitations of philosophies new and old have produced quantities of pertinent data and varieties of interpretations, almost beyond what any one man can any longer hope to assimilate. The cry is now for synthesis—for the far reaching and deep probing formulae which will organize and coordinate the multitude of facts. The ground needs clearing for more fruitful research and study. The beginning student, and the average man who wants quick and thorough psychological information, stand in need of a basic summary of sound and acceptable psychology.

Psychologists are certainly responding to the felt need, according to the annual testimony of the book lists, but, to date, no one book has appeared which threatens to sweep the field before it. It is not easy to synthesize a science as complex as psychology, and especially a science whose frontiers fade almost imperceptibly into ethics, religion, sociology and a host of other disciplines in which value judgments more or less dominate. Neither is it satisfactory to try to delimit psychology from its natural tendency to impinge. For the present, psychologists have to be satisfied with the best that they can do, until the generally satisfactory synthesis can be achieved.

The authors of the book under review have taken the general principles of scholastic psychology as their synthesizing principles, and, for their purpose or aim, the integration of contemporary psychological findings with these and by these principles, in a form more descriptive than analytical, and definitely oriented toward practical application. From this account, some of the virtues of the book might be surmised. It is orderly and it has depth. Its order is simplicity itself, beginning with the general introductory notions and then proceeding through the range of psychological activities from the lowest and external to the highest and most internal. Adequate account is taken throughout of the relative positions of the several psychological schools. The concluding section deals with the inferences

which may validly be drawn from the evidences of activities to the nature of the principles of these activities.

The integration of philosophical principle and empirical finding is smooth—a smoothness which bears out, in practice at least, the authors' contention that psychology is not a dualistic but an integral science. This is a definition towards which the reviewer also leans strongly, and he only regrets that its validity is not always sufficiently safeguarded in the text, and never demonstrated. If, however, the definition is ample enough in this respect, it is less than ample, from a traditional point of view, in limiting the subject of psychology to 'mind,' to the exclusion of broader considerations of 'life,'—an exclusiveness which has no particular philosophical virtue, and which must sooner or later be abandoned in any event in order to describe many mental processes adequately. Otherwise, however, the matter is presented very completely, within the limits expected of an elementary text, and is especially good in the coverage of more general psychological states and processes, such as perception, attention, suggestion, etc. The summary technique is used successfully, and the occasional digressions into more or less homespun "appreciations" and practical counsels lighten and enrich the course of the exposition.

The real strength, however, of this text is description. The authors have not only taken their stand on principles of realistic doctrine, but also on the principles of realistic exposition. It is one thing to make realistic judgments of facts, and another thing to present them in a style which conveys a sense of their reality, a sense of the data consonant with everyday experience. In no science is this more important than in psychology, whose subject matter is daily present to everyone. Often enough, however, the expositions of realistic psychology are couched in a form so abstract and technical that the total impression given fails to bear out meaning originally intended. *Fathers Bruehl and Campbell* are determined to avoid this defect and avoid it they do. It is a tribute to their years of study and teaching experience that the text never loses its flavor of everyday psychological experience.

Nevertheless, devotion to this ideal or realistic description, of expounding data in an experimental context, is not enough to make a text superlatively good, and in the present case, something of scientific perfection seems to have been sacrificed for descriptive color. In places it seems that accuracy of expression gives way to vigor. In other places, the evidence, experiential and inferential, is passed over in favor of fuller description and practical application, leaving the reader (or teacher) the burden of supplying the premisses for the conclusions. Often, in fact, matters are presented as simple assertions without the benefit of any supporting data.

In the majority of instances, these defects are of small moment, being easily supplied for by the reader. They assume, however, more importance

when controversial conclusions are presented in a one-sided manner without the evidences and reasoning processes which have led to them. Perhaps this is complicated further by an eclectic use of scholastic philosophy. While, by and large, the authors adhere to the Thomistic synthesis, in several instances they depart from it radically, and generally without expressing their reasons. As a result, it is often difficult to assess their position. A striking instance of this is the identification of the common sense and the estimative sense (Chapter XIII), an identification which not only does away, to St. Thomas' way of thinking, with the essential function of either sense, but also departs from the fundamental principle of distinguishing powers by their formal objects. The whole function of the common sense as an integrating power for the external sensations depends on its *not* producing an express species, since such a species would impede this sense's orientation to *hic et nunc* reality. The estimative sense, on the other hand (or better, the cogitative sense in man) operates precisely by collecting and organizing experience and expressing the collation in images (the data of experience) for the abstractive work of the intellect. It may be that the authors have cogent reasons for identifying these senses, but it is hard to justify their appeal to St. Thomas' authority, as they cite his description of the estimative sense and apply it to the common sense. (p. 148) It would seem also that the evidences of perceptual disorders from brain lesions (p. 151) argues for a real distinction between these two powers. In another place, indeed, a distinct capacity for estimation is described, although most briefly, but this more compounds than solves the problem. (pp. 222-223)

Again the authors identify the active and possible intellects, which is also a notable departure from St. Thomas' principle of distinguishing powers. The active intellect, in fact, would not seem even to pertain to the order of powers formally cognitive, in as much as it knows nothing, but rather effects the knowability of material things.

There are also other instances in which the authors would have served better the reader's wants by presenting their own line of argument more fully. So, for instance, they argue for a 'one consciousness' in man (p. 240), and for the pre-eminence of the will over the intellect. It would seem, as a matter of fact, that the general exposition of the nature and activity of the will would have profited from a more thorough analysis of its relation to and dependence on the intellect.

There are other minor points also with which one might take issue, particularly if an opinion personally favored seems to be dismissed with too little hearing. That, however, is a criticism to which any text book is subject, and especially a text in psychology. And, in spite of the objections to this or that conclusion, the content as a whole ought to be widely

acceptable, not only for the maturity of judgment exhibited but also, as has been remarked, for its readable, not to say homely, style. It is a pleasure to read a text which reads as though it were written to be read.

MICHAEL STOCK, O. P.

*Dominican House of Philosophy,
Dover, Mass.*

Socrates: Man and Myth. By ANTON-HERMANN CHROUST. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1957. Pp. 336. \$6.75.

There was once a schoolmaster who maintained that once in each semester his class should stand on their heads to get a new look at the world. Those many readers who have been accustomed to take the Platonic picture of Socrates substantially at its face-value will feel that Dr. Chroust's book is just such an exercise. Not that it is directly about the Platonic Socrates; still less directly does it attempt to treat of Socrates himself, and in this respect the title is rather misleading. What is under examination is the literary and historical background to the two Socratic apologies of Xenophon, the *Defence of Socrates* and *Memorabilia* 1.1.1-1.2.64. Those used to thinking of Xenophon's Socratic writings as more down-to-earth and matter-of-fact than Plato's will find themselves in a still more topsy-turvy world, for these are characterised as "primarily the product of creative writing and unfettered imagination."

The basic authority is considered to be a lost work, the existence of which is attested by several ancient authors, the *Accusation of Socrates* by Polycrates, to the presumed contents of which nearly 100 pages are devoted. The attempted reconstruction (not the first) of this work, ancient accounts of which are admittedly uncertain and contradictory, has so captured the author's imagination that he seems at times (cf. pp. 71, 74) to refer to it as actually in being. The effort may also have caused him to lose sight of its purpose in the main scheme and to have made Polycrates the real subject of the book. This is perhaps responsible for an apparent trace of circularity in the argument. For we read on p. 70 that "neither Plato nor Xenophon make any direct reference to Polycrates, despite the fact that his *Accusation of Socrates* made a profound impression on both." Yet two pages later it is only "assumed that Xenophon and Libanius had read" the work. (The subsequent statement that Hirzel's contrary conjecture has been refuted is a rare instance of non-documentation, uncommon indeed in a book of this size with 1476 footnotes.) It is, then, with this presupposition that Xenophon and Libanius are used to help reconstruct Polycrates and he in turn used to interpret Xenophon. But we think that the minutely probative form in which the argument is cast does not do justice

to the genuine evidence under review. The basic idea may be thought to be that the apologies of Libanius and Xenophon show certain correspondences in the points selected for defence. As the former is certainly at least indirectly dependent on Polycrates's attack, there is the possibility of conjecture that the latter was similarly motivated. To the extent that we accept the conjecture, Xenophon's work will be seen not as an attempt to give a historical portrait, but as a rejoinder to a pamphlet written some six years after the death of Socrates.

Behind the no longer extant Polycrates, the author tries to estimate a further influence, that of the scarcely extant Antisthenes, a personality whose lines are themselves shrouded by subsequent overlay. We might have expected that Polycrates would have been first considered in relation to Antisthenes, then Xenophon in the light of this further analysis of his presumed source. But the reverse order is adopted, so that the two investigations are brought into no evident relationship. This re-inforces our suspicion that the proper subtitle should be not "The Two Socratic Apologies of Xenophon" but rather "The Socratic Accusation of Polycrates."

Dr. Chroust's declared principles leave little room for hope that any just estimate of Socrates as a historical personage can be reached. Yet behind the pamphleteering and the contending schools of Sophists in the early fourth century there certainly lay some genuine memories of the man who was condemned to death in 399 B.C. Is it in any way at all possible to penetrate the veil of sources whose content and motivation can be hardly more than guessed at? (Lest it be thought that the author is generally over-assertive, be it said that we have counted eighteen phrases of hesitant qualification on a single page.) In his penultimate chapter Dr. Chroust argues (even from the very silence of the extant tradition) to a Socrates who was more of a politician than a philosopher, condemned in a democratic purge of conspicuously aristocratic elements. The evidence for this is extremely well marshalled, and while one may think the negative side of the conclusion a little exaggerated, and suspect the presence of a prejudice against any kind of a philosophic Socrates, the political picture drawn does avoid what has always seemed to us the grotesque unlikelihood of Socrates being condemned because he was some kind of grandfather of Plato's Academy.

We recently saw this book displayed on a shelf labelled *General Non-Fiction*. It was certainly misplaced under the first heading, for the wealth of minute erudition in it challenges the appraisal only of the finest scholarship. But the second? "Nearly every Socratic has modelled his 'Socratic legend' after his own image" (p. 196) and in this new version there are certainly subjective elements which it will take time for the conspectus of learned opinion to evaluate.

Ivo THOMAS, O. P.

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

DANTE LIGHTS THE WAY. By RUTH FOX. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1958. Pp. 389. \$4.95.

Pope Benedict XV, in the only encyclical ever issued to commemorate a literary figure, wrote that "among the topics we find treated in the various works of Dante, some have particular value for our own times." He then listed among these his "insistence on the supreme reverence due from all men to Holy Scripture," to the Councils and the Fathers, and his "wonderful reverence for the power of the Roman Pontiff," in spite of his bitter experience with the Popes of his time. Furthermore, says Benedict XV: "We need not wonder that this poem, rising like a temple from such broad religious foundations, is found to be a rich storehouse of Catholic doctrine, containing not merely the distilled sweetness of Christian philosophy and theology, but also a *summa* of those laws, divinely wise, which guarantee success in creating and governing political societies . . . We need not dwell on the wonder and delight that elevate the reader of this transcendent poetic creation. But this artistic enjoyment, we must insist, will lead the reader up and on, not merely to a profound appreciation of all art and culture, but also to a keen longing for manly virtue in his own life, though prejudice, of course, and deficient love of truth may nullify this prospect. Other poets there are, too, great and good, who lead men on from enjoyment to virtue. But none succeeds as Dante."

Some modern critics, Elder Olsen for example, have questioned whether Dante's *Divine Comedy* ought to be considered a poem at all, since its purpose is so manifestly didactic. Is it not rather rhetoric since it aims to move us to virtue? Benedict XV seems to answer this by a distinction. The immediate and proper end of the work is artistic enjoyment and hence the work is truly a poem. Nevertheless this enjoyment leaves behind it a deep moral impression, a delight in and longing for the perfection of virtue.

The author of this work states her own purpose clearly: "This book is not an exegesis of the text of the *Divine Comedy*. It is not an attempt to deal with Dante's poem primarily as poetry, though many of his poetic images will be discussed. It is planned as a general handbook for those who are not familiar with Dante as a man or with his times or with his mental climate. It is an effort to clear away a few of the difficulties—philosophical, theological, and liturgical—which have interposed for many readers between his time and ours."

As a professor of English in a state university for many years she well understands just what these difficulties are, and she has succeeded remarkably in her task. The first part of the book traces Dante's life, the history of the composition of his masterpiece, and outlines its structure. Part Two discusses in detail several of the central themes of the work: the angels,

the Virgin, the Trinity, the Saviour and His Mystical Body. The third part shows how Dante's poem can be a light to guide the individual in the road of spiritual progress, and our troubled society on the road to peace. Technical difficulties are discussed in the very interesting notes to each chapter, and the book is completed by a brief pictorial appendix, and an index.

The author has carefully informed herself on the immense literature of scholarly controversy which concerns this poem, but she does not trouble the reader with such matters. Rather she seeks to show how a wonderfully rich and unified conception of God and of man's relation to God and to the whole universe penetrate every detail of the poem. As one reads, a splendid and marvelously articulated vision is opened like the unfolding of a flower, the mystic white rose of the empyrean heaven.

The special contribution made by this book to our understanding of Dante is that the author has had the patience really to enter into Dante's theological point of view. She has not merely matched Dante's remarks and symbols with the corresponding passage in St. Thomas, St. Augustine, or St. Bonaventure, but has tried to show us how Dante's own living desire to understand the reality of heaven and of earth and of the human soul is the inspiration of all the details of his poem. This she has communicated in a style that is free from sentimentality, with both radiant warmth and a precision of detailed analysis.

The most original thing in the book is probably chapter IX, "Purgation for Perfection," which is of really practical help for our spiritual life today. In it the author shows how Dante has given poetic embodiment to the whole doctrine of the way of Christian perfection and the states of prayer. Beginners in the spiritual life need a vision of their goal, yet they can gain such an insight only in poetic terms. Consequently God has given imaginative visions to some beginners in the spiritual life to awaken their earnest striving. Sometimes mystics have themselves written poetry to communicate this insight to their readers. Yet such communication will fail if the mystic is not a skilled poet. Dante (whether he was raised to mystical prayer or not) was a supreme poet who was able to lend his art to the presentation of the spiritual doctrine which he has found in the writings of the great mystics and theologians of the Church. We who are sometimes repelled by the literary form of such mystics or theologians, can find in Dante great spiritual doctrine communicated through the greatest poetry. Miss Fox has unfolded this fascinating vision for us all to see, even for those who are not yet within the fold.

BENEDICT M. ASHLEY, O. P.

*Dominican House of Studies,
River Forest, Illinois*

Aesthetics: Lectures & Essays. By EDWARD BULLOUGH. Edited by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957. Pp. 201. \$4.50.

This book is both a sampling of the work and a memoir of Edward Bullough, Professor of Italian at Cambridge University in the early part of this century and a many-sided man. Miss Wilkinson, apparently inspired by a student of Bullough, has performed a service by rescuing his thought from private printing and the files of old journals and adding an introduction, a biographical note and a list of his publications.

The framework of Bullough's thinking about aesthetics is contained in "A Modern Conception of Aesthetics" a series of lectures given in 1907 at Cambridge on his "intellectual hobby." Here he puts forward the view that aesthetics should be concerned with the impressions created by beautiful objects on individual persons, as against the traditional idea that this branch of knowledge should start by defining Beauty and working downward to application. He is not abashed to discover that impressions differ widely, not only from culture to culture but even from person to person, and indeed it is precisely this variety that he envisions as the subject matter of the discipline. He proposes that there is such a thing as "aesthetic consciousness"—as distinguished from the practical, scientific or ethical consciousness—which is contemplative and "invests all things it touches with a charm and interest . . . [and] discovers that innumerable acts are daily done, not for the sake of practical utility nor in conscious observance of ethical postulates, but because the doing of them was accompanied by that peculiar sense of enjoyment in doing them well, with all the strength, perfection and grace that could be imparted to them." (p. 75) He confesses indeed that he believes in "Aestheticism" but is quick to distinguish his position from that "atmosphere heavy with overpowering exotic scent, effeminate finickiness and general decadence" which W. S. Gilbert had satirized in his time.

Bullough is a clear, patient thinker with an easy but exact style and he has a great many perceptive things to say about art, the artist and the recipient of art. A convert to Catholicism (and a Dominican tertiary whose son is the Rev. Sebastian Bullough, O.P.), his speculations are not derived from Thomistic philosophy, but might be said to be Thomistic in spirit because of his fearlessness in confronting the complexities of his subject. When it comes to the purpose and function of the "aesthetic consciousness" he is content to hand over the problem to the metaphysician.

The essay on "Psychical Distance" deals well and thoroughly with a concept that has become widely accepted in recent years and which has pertinence to some of the recent discussion on the effect of art in the moral realm, and the final chapter "Mind and Medium in Art" reveals a

sympathetic insight into the relationship between the artist and the conditions which govern his attempt to impose his intuitions on his material. Bullough is especially respectful of the art of acting, by the way (a rare note in aesthetic writing) possibly because his marriage to the daughter of Eleanora Duse brought him into a close association with the great Italian actress.

The book contains a great deal of common and uncommon sense about a tricky subject and deserves a high place among other recent investigations by Maritain, Vann, Gardner, Murray and Kerr. Miss Wilkinson sees certain correspondences between Bullough and Suzanne Langer, but I find it difficult to follow her here.

LEO BRADY

*Catholic University of America,
Washington, D. C.*

The Word of Salvation. By ALFRED DURAND, S. J. and JOSEPH HUBY, S. J.
Vol. I, Translated by John J. Heenan, S. J. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957.
Pp. 965 with index. \$12.50.

A translation is not to be scorned or minimized simply because it is a translation. A translator truly produces a new work, at greater effort, often, than that of the original author, for the translator must possess not only the art of writing but also the art of conveying concepts in a new language. Here, then, is a work of prodigious scholarship, and congratulations are in order for the translator, Fr. Heenan. This is the first of a two-volume commentary on the four Gospels originally published in French a little over thirty years ago under the title *Verbum Salutis*. The commentary on Matthew was done by Fr. Durand and on Mark by Fr. Huby. Since the work was intended to offer a simple and accurate explanation of the text for the general reader, the authors reduced to a minimum all technical discussions and avoided controversial and strictly exegetical questions; yet they did not forbid themselves "any of the theological, ascetical and mystical reflections" that seemed apt to aid in "penetrating to the marrow of the Gospel teaching and in tasting its savor" (p. v).

The procedure is simple. First there is given a short section of the Gospel (usually a few verses or a pericope), with references to the parallel places in the other sacred books. The commentary follows. Then a few more verses of the text and their explanation; and so on through each Gospel. The Gospel text itself is really a new English version, for the translator did not take any of the current Catholic versions but rather adapted his own from the French for the sake of uniformity. The commentaries, in

general, are quite reasonable, and the authors do not force the text; doubts are still doubts. Fr. Durand's explanation of Matthew is clear, not too long, and suitable for preaching and meditation. There are many footnotes, mostly from other places in the Bible; this is sometimes misleading, since these references are not always to be taken according to the literal sense and consequently they really do not substantiate the statements in the commentary. Fr. Huby's exposition, on the other hand, is a bit more drawn out, and dwells more on theological points (at least in the early chapters of Mark) than does Fr. Durand's; the notes are taken from a wide range of authors, ancient, medieval and modern.

Especially praiseworthy are Fr. Durand's explanation of the Our Father (p. 101, ff.), the problem of the staff for the apostolic journey (p. 174), the least in the kingdom being greater than John the Baptist (p. 193), the basis of the evangelical counsels (p. 333), and the purpose of the parables (p. 230 ff.), together with the distinction between allegory and parable (p. 236). Fr. Huby gives a good theological explanation of our Lord's temptations (p. 532, ff.), the meaning of "Son of Man" (p. 557, ff.), and the parable of the sower (p. 610, ff.); but the treatment of the purpose of the parables (pp. 604-610) is poor in comparison with the other. The proofreaders have done very well, too, in eliminating all but a few errors: pp. xxi, 190, 255, 475, and one ambiguous reference on p. 660.

For all its good points, this book leaves much to be desired. Its value certainly would be increased if only the translator had edited a little, to bring it up to date. The translation of the Gospel itself retains *thee, thou, girdle, didst, wouldst* and similar outmoded words which are being discarded in the newer English versions. In the light of the Qumran discoveries the explanation of the Essenes could be improved (p. 28). So also the statement about divorce (p. 88, note) could be made clearer by at least a mention of the interpretation of Fr. Vaccari, who wrote that the "exception" of the case of fornication means simply that such a union is always unlawful and therefore the man *must* put away the woman. It would be theologically inaccurate to say, "All—the Evangelist, the multitudes, the Pharisees, and *Christ himself*—believe that the malady of [the] poor unfortunate blind and dumb man [Mt. 12:22] is the result of diabolical possession" (p. 210, italics mine); but it would seem from the context that this is not to be taken in the strict sense. Fr. Huby reconciles the difficulties of the hour of the crucifixion (p. 899) and the two thieves insulting our Lord (p. 902), but passes over the problem involved in Peter's denials. He seems also to accept the authority of the Codex Washingtoniensis (Freer) among others on p. 666, but rejects it on p. 671.

Of particular interest to this reviewer is the rather large number of Greek words and references to Greek texts in this work—well over fifty. If there

be any foundation to the recent complaints that there are no Catholic scholars in America, then the use of Greek words in a word intended for the general reader seems rather vain. If, on the other hand, the publishers feel that these words will be understood, then why not perform a really good service by printing a complete Greek text, with a commentary on that? In the meantime we do hope that Fr. Heenan will continue his services to scholarship by bringing us translations of the best French works, old and new.

JAMES J. DAVIS, O. P.

*Dominican House of Philosophy,
Dover, Massachusetts*

Words and Images: A Study in Theological Discourse. By E. L. MASCALL.
New York: Ronald Press, 1957. Pp. 132. \$3.50.

In this closely reasoned little book, containing only six chapters, the noted Anglican cleric gives us a valuable restatement of the traditional Christian philosophy of knowledge. In clear and simple language, with the barest minimum of technical terminology, he states the case effectively for truly objective perception. These essays are within the reach of many students of thought, who may not have mastered scholastic method or style, though they are seriously concerned with the doctrine of human knowledge. For this reason the work is to be recommended as a valuable text for general reading and as a collateral source book in our epistemology.

The central aim of the author is to present a rational justification for our thinking and talking about God. As necessary preliminary he defends, altogether convincingly, the belief in the existence of real things, objects outside the mind, the mind itself, other minds. To clear the ground he exposes the uncritical assumptions in "certain widely publicized positions, which if accepted would dismiss (his) task as irrelevant and doomed to futility from the start." (p. 121) The statement and defence of our perception is logically followed by a brief and trenchant exposition of "the relation of theological thought and knowledge to its communication." (p. 122) In this chapter the writer has some very enlightening lines on the value of images involved in revelation and theological thought, suggesting by its very brevity and pointedness a vast field of theological work in the area of words, concepts, symbols, and images. This reviewer feels that theologians are only beginning to exploit and popularize the possibilities in this amazingly interesting realm of philosophy and theology.

In the brief statement of background, Mascall notes that it is the dominant school of Anglo-Saxon philosophy which extended the "ideal of cognitive process," because of its remarkable success in the limited field of

scientific and mathematic experience, to cover experience as a whole, "looking upon the ideal of knowledge as detached, discursive and arrested at the level of phenomena." Over against this he sets the "ideal of knowledge as involving committment, contemplation and penetration beneath the phenomenal level," for this is essential if one is to discover and explore the "realities with which Christianity is concerned." With remarkable freshness and cogency he states the traditional position: perception is in its essence not mere sense-awareness but intellectual apprehension which takes place through the medium of sensation. The intelligible object is not something whose existence is deduced from that of sensible phenomena, as Locke thought, but something grasped through them.

Similarly the linguistic formulae are not *objecta quae* of communication in which case conversation would terminate in mere *flatus vocis*, nor are they mere structural replicas, more or less accurate, of the thought which has been coded into them, but the means through which (*objecta quibus*) two minds are enabled to enter into a sharing of common intellectual life.

The book is distinguished for many valuable insights, notably in the historical contexts, for the cavalier and calm presentation, and even for a certain wryness of humor. There is a good bibliography, a brief index of proper names. The summary of the essays in chapter six is excellent. Except for the rather clouded expression of opinion on the five ways of Saint Thomas (p. 84) the work seems uniformly good.

EDWIN G. KAISER, C. PP. S.

Saint Joseph's College
Rensselaer, Indiana

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